THE 8° Th. G. 2

SINNER'S TEARS, IN Meditations AND PRAYERS.

By THO. FETTIPLACE, *Dom. Pet. Cantab.*

Matth. 3. 2.
Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

TO THE
Right Honourable,
Richard *Lord* Keble,

One of the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal of *England*; And the much Honoured *Mary* his truly Vertuous and Religious Lady; Grace and Peace.

My honoured Lord,

I *Know not where to find a fitter Patron for Tears than your Lordship, the constant Series of whose happy days, hath been an exact Pattern of true Piety, and but one entire Oblation of sincere Devotion: Greatness and Goodness are the best Supporters of decaying Holiness; by the one*

she is defended from suffering ill, by the other, incouraged in doing well. These high and happy Ornaments, together with my nearness of Blood unto your Honor's neareſt Relation; and mine Infant Education in that gracious Family (to which (as to the happy Instruments) I thankfully ascribe my first engraftings into Christ) are strong perswasions to invite me to presume upon your Honor's Patronage of this small Tract, and humbly to present you with a taste of such wholsom Fruits, as (by divine increase) have had their growth from these precedent Blossoms. If ever Kneeling were in season, now is the needful time, when there is not only Wrath gone out from the Lord against us, but even the bloody Vials of his fiercest Wrath are daily poured down upon us. I willingly confess my self to have been too deep a sharer in those grievous sins, which have enforced these heavy Judgments; what I cannot recall, I desire heartily to deplore, and (as a true sign of mine unfeigned sorrow) according to the measure of my weak abilities, have penn'd these following Lines: accept of them I beseech you, as humbly devoted to your Honor's ser-

vice;

vice; and read them as the disturbed notions of my distracted Meditations. That holy Providence which hath directed their ends, will (I trust) supply their defects; even this the least of Grains (by that mercy) may become a fruitful Tree, and branch it self into matter of commemoration to the learned, of instruction to the ignorant, of help to the weak, of comfort to the willing, of joy to the good, of terror to the bad, of happiness (I trust) to all that are directed to it, and especially unto their souls that stand in greatest need of comfort from it.

I shall not presume to enlarge my self with waste expressions, because I know your Lordship's more weighty Affairs will not admit of such fruitless endeavours; I shall now only crave your Honor's leave, to end with Orisons; *as you have been both holy in your lives, so may you be happy in your deaths, blessed in your memorials; may those hopeful Pledges of your loves be faithful Earnests of your joys, and future Branches of the Churches peace; may they all (by your examples) go on chearfully and joyfully in those paths of Piety which*

lead to rest and quietness, that their seed-time being sorrow, their harvest may be joy; that all tears may be wiped from their eyes, all sorrows from their hearts; This is (my honoured Lord) the most affectionate desire, as a Kinsman, the most zealous as a Christian, of

The most humble

of all your Honor's Servants,

Tho. Fettiplace.

To the Christian Reader all Christian Consolation.

READER,

THe miseries of this distressed age are such, and so many, that I know well, a subject of joy would, in the worlds eye, appear more seasonable, and be far more acceptable, after such a deluge of sorrow: but that heart which is as truly sensible of the weight of *Sin*, as of the burden of *Misery*, will surely find, that there is no true joy but in *godly sorrow*, that there is more complacency of soul in *one repentant tear*, than in *an age of pleasure*: with grief of heart I confess, that much of my *little time* hath been *vainly spent*, I now (therefore) willingly resolve, to lament my *lost hours*, and shall account it my *chiefest happiness* on earth, to spend my short remainder to my *best advantage*; I beseech thee therefore (for thine own sake) to consider with me, that God hath *reserved* us unto the *last*, the *worst*, the very *dregs of time*; that our *transgressions* are innumerable, our

calamities unmatchable, our *griefs* unutterable, our *hours*, our *minutes*, perhaps are few, and full of evil, that it were even now most just with God to bring them to an end, that Satan's *cunning* is unsearchable, his *malice* implacable, and (without *divine assistance*) irresistable; that there is no *one minute* of our *whole lives*, in which we are not exposed unto *many great dangers*, both of *souls* and *bodies*; and we shall then find, that it behoveth us to *watch* and *pray*, that it mainly concerneth us to *store* our selves with such *fit remedies*, as may either *enable* in the *combat*, or *support* us in the *foil*.

Such *humble Confessions*, and *devout Prayers*, as (by God's mercy) I have found agreeable to mine own condition, I have here published for the good of thine; and such *true comfort* as I have enjoyed in them, I heartily desire may be derived to thee from them: And my *humble* and *most earnest Petition* unto Almighty God is, that as we have been deep sharers in *sinning* and in *suffering*, so we may also be de-

vout ſharers in *ſorrowing*, that the Vials of our *Tears*, may pacifie the Vials of his *Wrath*, that ſo his *fierce anger* may be appeaſed, our *crying ſins* pardoned, our *bad conſciences* quieted, our *bleeding hearts* comforted, our *languiſhing deſires* relieved, our *ſad diviſions* ended, our *diſtreſſed Church* reſtored, our *dear Country* preſerved, and our *ſinful ſouls* and *bodies* eternally ſaved.

With this happy reſolution of *timely contrition*, I joyfully imbrace thee, and earneſtly intreat to be imbraced by thee, that by this bleſſed Union of our Souls upon Earth, we may at laſt enjoy each other, in thoſe ſweet imbraces of Eternity, which is the cordial Deſire, and ſhall be the daily and devout Prayer of

Thy Servant
in all good affections and
hearty well-wiſhes in Chriſt Jeſus,

Tho. Ferriplace.

THE
Sinner's Complaint.

AH, Lord, so long! what sudden fears?
What cares and doubts, what sighs and tears,
Since last thou did'st afford thy loving look,
Have me oppress,
And robb'd of rest,
Because thou, Lord, thy servant hast forsook?

If not a look, yet hear me speak,
And pity me; O do not break
Thy bruised reed; why should'st thou strive with man,
Whose days are done,
When but begun,
Sith' thou, great God, hast measur'd out his span?

Affright me not with fearful things;
Give me thy grace, O give me wings
Of swift desire, and holy zeal, to raise
My soul to skys,
With powerful crys,
That I may sweetly warble forth thy praise.

Thou art my Centre, fix me there,
Or move me in thy blessed Sphere;
Suffer me not (dear Lord) to move from thee;
There is no rest,
But in thy breast,
And in thine absence present misery.

O that

The Sinner's Complaint.

O that I were at rest with thee!
Or else that thou were come to me,
Since in thine absence I am so distrest;
Thy wrathful frown
Hath thrown me down,
And rais'd a storm in my unquiet brest.

Come, Lord, and close these wretched eyes,
So blear'd with sins and miseries;
Resolve this erring heart to clearer dust,
Which every day
Thus steals away,
That it may rise more joyful and more just.

THE Sinner's Joy.

AH my Soul! why so dismayd?
Why so sad, so sore afraid?
Canst thou think those gracious eyes,
Drunch'd in teares for thee,
Can disdain such powerful crys,
Such humility?
Sinners souls must sorrow keep,
Man may mourn, when God can weep.

Soul, though thou hast done amiss,
Yet rejoyce, for thou art his.
See, his soul was sad to death,
In his agony,
Sad to taste thy woful breath,
In thy misery.
Be not faithless, but believe,
Man may sigh, when God can grieve.

Do not grudge to lend a tear,
Can'st thou doubt, or can'st thou fear?
Can'st thou see his bleeding heart,
And not believe him?
Wounded soul that bears a part,
Can never grieve him.
Timely tears are precious seed,
Man may weep, when God can bleed.

Be not so cast down; Alas!
See his soul forsaken was
Frighted with his Father's frown,
Left in pains of hell:
Ah why art thou so cast down;
'Twas to make thee well;
Doubt not, but admire his cost,
Man may stray, when God was lost.

Soul, when thou art left alone,
Do not deem thy Saviour gone,
When thou canst not see his face,
'Tis to let thee know
That those sinners with-draw his grace,
Which brought him so low.
See where he in grave doth lie,
Man may faint when God can die.

Weep no more, but wipe thine eyes,
See, O see, thy Saviour rise,
Happy Soul, thy debts are paid,
He is ascended;
Death is not, be not afraid,
All woes are ended;
Grieve no more, believe and live,
Man may take when God can give.

Deo Salvatori.

With sighing soul, and bended knee,
Thy Servant vows himself to thee:
My God, accept a broken heart
Bleeding for Sin; O thou which art
The Soveriegn Balm, vouchsafe to be
(My dearest Lord) that Balm to me.
Enlighten with thy saving grace,
Those eyes thou guidest to this place,
And grant (dear God) those sins of mine
May not obscure that sweet of thine.

Amen.

THE

THE Sinner's Tears.

The Entrance to the Work.

THere is no man but naturally desireth Happiness; even those unhappy ones that least endeavour for it, have oftentimes an earnest longing to it; there can be no true Happiness without Peace, no true Peace without Holiness, without offering violence to our corrupt Affections, without ransaking our Souls, and searching out the very secrets of our sinful Hearts: the Worldling may be outwardly merry, but none but the Sons of Sorrow can be inwardly contented; that outward Joy may delight for a season, but this inward Peace remaineth for ever.

Peace is the richest Jewel in a Christian's Cabinet, the choicest Legacy that Christ bequeathed to his Chosen Ones; in it there is a complication of all Blessings, and without it an expectation of all Miseries; there is no attaining to it, but by the search of him who is the giver of it; there is no following this search, but by that path which leadeth to the ready way, and there is but one Guide that can direct us unto that path. Blessed God, there is no way unto thee but by thee, thou art life, and thou art the way to that life, and thou art the guide to that way, thou, Lord, art all in all unto me, and there-

therefore shalt be now and ever praised by me.

In all awful reverence to thy Sacred Majesty, in fear and trembling at the sight of thy severe Justice to impenitent sinners, in serious apprehension of thy sweet mercy, in forbearing me a miserable wretch, and with unfeigned sorrow and humility of heart for grieving thy good Spirit, I here dedicate the short remainder of my sinful days to thy service; In thy name, and in thy fear, I begin my discourse, who art the God of peace, by whose holy Spirit I am guided to this happy search: Lord, lead me in it by the same Spirit, that I may become an instrument of glory unto thee, of happiness to thine, of rest to mine own soul.

CHAP. I.

Upon the consideration of our sinful thoughts touching the Sacred Deity, with holy cautions to order our Devotions aright.

Lord,

WHen I seriously consider what thou art, (the least glimps of whose eternal glory I can no way see but by conceiving what thou art not) when I look upon the vast distance between thee the blessed Creator, and me thy sinful Creature, I cannot but wonder at thy great patience, at thy rich goodness, at thine endless mercy towards me.

My whole life from my nativity hath been a continued course of sinfulness against thee, mine actions highly rebellious, my thoughts sinfully wicked, even the very best of them a dark confused, indigested heap of misconceivings of thy Sacred Majesty.

Thou

Thou (Lord) art an Essence most glorious, most incomprehensible, eternally enjoying Blessedness in the fruition of thy self; thy Centre is every where, thy Circumference no where; thou admittest not of Augmentation, nor of Diminution; no length of time is beyond thee, no depth of wisdom beneath thee, no height of glory above thee, no breadth of mercy beside thee: Thou art, O Lord, a most pure, simple, and eternal Being; Pure without matter, without form; Simple without mixture, without composition; Eternal, without beginning, without end: no created being can express thee, no imagination conceive thee, no understanding utter thee: when I think of thee as thou art, the bright beams of thy glory amaze me; when I conceive of thee what thou art not, the terrors of mine own heart affright me; even but the least thought of this kind is impious, seeing that hereby I do not only rob thee of thy glory, but even deprive thee of thy self: and yet, Lord, as thy being is most high, so is thy search thereof most necessary, because from it (as from the blessed fountain) I enjoy my present, I expect my future happiness; and unto it with joy of heart, and earnestness of soul, I desire should run the current of my praises in this life, of my Allelujahs in that to come.

When I find (therefore) any corporal parts appropriated to the Divine nature, I there see thee graciously descending to the weakness of my frail and infirm nature, and ever bless thy holy name that vouchsafest to declare thy self, not as thou art, but as I am: Thine Eye (Lord) is thy Wisdom; thy Right Hand, thy Power; thy

Sit-

out

Sitting, thine Immutability; thy Standing, thy Fortitude; thine Anger, thy Juſtice in puniſhing; thy Repentance, thy Mercy in pardoning; thy Hatred of Sin, thy Holineſs; thy Grieving, thy Loving-kindneſs; thy Patience and Long-ſuffering, thy Goodneſs; all are thy ſelf.

Neither is it enough for me to conſider the Divine Nature in Unity of Eſſence, unleſs I go yet further and find a Trinity of Perſons; to be curious in this ſearch is dangerous, to be careleſs damnable; nothing may be here ſafely ſeen, but what is graciouſly revealed: Lord, no man can ſee thee as thou art in thy ſelf, ſuffer me therefore to ſee thee as thou art unto us, that I may know thee, and love thee, and delight in thee, and be for ever known and loved of thee.

If there were not an eternity of being, then it may be truly ſaid, that not being was before being, and ſo that being had its riſe from not being, by cauſing it ſelf to be when it was not; So ſhould Privation which was eternally evil, produce that glorious being which is eternally good: Seeing this cannot be, it will hence follow, that being was from all eternity, and that this being was eternally good; for that which was good in the effect, muſt needs be far more eminently good in the cauſe. That this eternal good being muſt be alſo infinite, becauſe eternity it ſelf is infinite; That this infinite eternal good being, muſt be of infinite power, to continue infinitely; that this infinite power muſt alſo be of infinite underſtanding, to ſupport and preſerve this eternal infi-

infinite good being; and this infinite understanding is God.

Where there is an infinite understanding, there must also be an infinite object to be understood, else could it not be infinitely active, and so should both eternity and infinity suffer diminution and become defective, which were for them both to be and not to be, which is impossible; and seeing there can be no object infinite out of God; therefore this eternal infinite and ever blessed object, must of necessity be God.

Where there is an infinite understanding, and an infinite object to be understood, there cannot chuse but be an infinite and eternal love; for from this infinite understanding of this infinitely amiable and for ever blessed object, there must needs proceed an infinite delight, whereby it infinitely enjoyeth its own excellency, and eternally reflecteth on the beauty of its own perfection; else this infinite eternal understanding should want power to enjoy this infinitely amiable object, and so should be neither good, infinite, nor eternal; and this infinite and eternal Love is God.

Now because this Understanding, Object and Love are all infinite, and that whatsoever is infinite must of necessity be God; it will from thence truly and undoubtedly follow, that this Understanding is God, this Object God, and this Love God. And because it is as equally impossible that there can be any more than one infinite, therefore it will as assuredly follow, that these three are one, three in Existence, one in Essence, three in Order, one in Eternity; three per-

persons, one eternal, infinite, glorious, incomprehensible, wise God; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

This is that blessed Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that ineffable, most mysterious Trinity in Unity, eternally enjoying blessedness in its own essence; This is that blessed inter-union of that ever blessed Spirit, that most unspeakable, immutable, incomprehensible fruition of eternal joy, at which the blessed Angels stand amazed, in which the blessed Saints shall sweetly rest themselves for ever.

All this, and infinitely more than this, thou art Lord in thy self, thy Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, Truth, Power, Holiness, and whatsoever other Attributes thou art pleas'd to take unto thy Divine Essence, are unto thee one, although unto us divers; And thou art therefore pleased diversly to manifest thy self unto us, because we cannot otherwise conceive thy being, than according to thine outward working; thy distinct operations are unto us the divers indications of thine eternal, undivided, and for ever blessed essence.

And now, Lord, who can see thee thus and live? I have hitherto seen nothing but destruction to my body, amazement to my soul. In thine essence there is light inaccessible, unto which no mortal eye can approach; in thine attributes terror unutterable, from which no mortal man can escape: Thy wisdom tryng my corrupt heart, and scorching my sinful reins; Thy justice most severe, fearful in the pronunciation, dreadful in the execution; Thy truth admitteth of no alteration; no judgment pronounced

nounced but precisely fulfilled; Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one tittle of thy Sacred Word; Thy Holiness is such, that even the blessed Angels are impure in thy sight; what then shall become of me a miserable wretch, the thoughts of whose heart are only evil, and that continually? were it not for thy rich mercy, I were lost for ever; by this alone I am for ever reconcil'd unto thee, and shall eternally be blessed with thee.

I can here with joy unspeakable and glorious, behold thee my loving Father affectionately imbracing me in Christ from all eternity, by the sweet working of thy holy Spirit; this is that truly-blessed vision of the sacred and mysterious Trinity in this life of Grace, that will for ever make me truly happy in that of Glory. Lord, if I find thee not Three in One to my Soul's comfort in this life, I shall never be found of thee to be blessed in thee in that to come.

Without thy Power it had not been decreed, without thy Wisdom it had never been acted, without thy Love it had never been finished. Here in a severe Judge I joyfully behold a merciful Redeemer; in a glorious Divinity a true Humanity, united to the Deity, not mixed with it; before I had three persons in one Essence, here I have two Natures in one Person, God and Man, one Christ, in whom, and by whom, I have a joyful interest and undoubted union in the Godhead. Here is the Father promising, the Son performing, the holy Spirit confirming. This is alone that blessed sight of God, that bringeth rest and quietness to my weary soul: To know him to be my God, to have suffered for

my

my sin, and rise again for my justification. To find him supporting, sustaining me in my infirmities, relieving my wants, mortifying my errors, revenging my wrongs, repairing my breaches, directing my ways, preserving my person, wounding, treading, breaking my obdurate heart, creating in me a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit within me; bemoaning, bewailing mine iniquities, having my compelling me to mercy and forgiveness.

Seeing now, O my Soul, that God's being in himself is incomprehensible, and his love in Christ unutterable, with what filial fear should'st thou think of him, with what awfulness mention him, with what reverence and preparedness pray unto him, with what heat of affection love him, with what carefulness and conscience fear to offend him, with what chearfulness and holy diligence devote thy service to him?

Blessed Lord,

Seeing that I am utterly unable of my self to comprehend thee, O let me be graciously comprehended of thee, that corruption may be swallowed up of immortality, and bondage frailty of eternal glory.

*As thou hast given me an understanding in part to know thee, so give me also affections sincerely to love thee, and fixed resolutions to adhere unto thee; that as thou art truly and eternally one in thine Essence, and yet distinctly three in thy Persons, so I may be truly and entirely one in my obedience, although distinctly three in my faculties; that all may be but one, and that

that a pleasing sacrifice of praises unto thee, of profit unto others, of comfort to my self.

Forgive my misconceivings of thy Sacred Essence, my rash approaches to thy heavenly presence, my cold, careless, irreligious thoughts, distracted words, undecent actions. Lord, I am sailing on the stormy sea of ignorance and misery, O be thou my sure Pilot to direct me, my sweet calm to refresh me, my safe harbour to receive me; for of thee, and through thee, and to thee, are all things: to thee be glory for ever. Amen.

CHAP. II.

Upon the consideration of God's Love, and Man's Unthankfulness.

A Meditation suited to the Morning.

Blessed God,

When I consider of the richness, of the largeness, of the constancy of thy love to man, of man's vileness and unmoveredness unto thee his God, I stand amazed at thy goodness, and mine own unthankfulness. How great and invaluable a blessing do I enjoy in being made partaker of the glorious light of this present day? how vile and unworthy am I that receive it? how great and glorious art thou that givest it? Thou, O Lord, art light inaccessible, unto which no mortal eye can approach; before whose glorious Majesty the blessed Angels stand amazed; and I am dust and ashes, yea worse, Lord, (for dust was thy creation, and therefore in its entity was good) before I was dust I was not at all: This not being by thee became a being,

this

this being beautiful, this beauty immortal; and without thee this happy being is again become far worse than not to be.

What can be more vain, more empty than nothing; ah wo is me, I am now become far worse than nothing; thou mad'st me all goodness, and that goodness might have made me all blessedness; but I have my self all sin, and this sin hath made me all misery; there was darkness in not being, but that darkness was incapable; there is greater darkness in being Ill; for this darkness is most capable of the privation of all light of comfort in this life, of the fruition of the blackness of darkness in hell for ever.

This, Lord, was my condition in Nature, and without thy gracious help must have been so for ever. Let me now see what my condition is by Grace, by which I enjoy not only the light of nature (without which my life would prove uncomfortable) but also a sweet and safe assurance, that thou wilt by this happy light conduct me safely to the blessed light of glory.

Blessed Lord, I can now look no way but to happiness, I now find a true sweetness and composedness of soul, a constant and courageous fetledness of heart, even in the very heighth of all the disturbances of Nature, of all the inundation of Sin, of all the fluctuations of Sorrow, of all the Machinations of Satan: from the sweet fountain of thy mercy, all the whole precious streams of Consolation, which abundantly relieve me in this barren Wilderness.

I find indeed a law in my members, continually rebelling against the law of my mind, but

but I find also thy grace to be sufficient for me, by which I am victorious here, and shall be triumphant hereafter: Satan may strive to winnow me like wheat, but this shall make me the purer for thy Granary. I now find a total and a blessed change of the whole man; mine affections which formerly were captivated unto sin, intirely devoted to thy service; my love with holy *David* wonderful to thy law, my hatred perfect against sin, my desire eager for thy presence, my fear astonishing in thine absence, my delight in thy promises ravishing, my joy in thy performances triumphing.

By these rich indowments of thine, I am wrapt up above the reach of humane misery; all vain and empty desires of the besotting pleasures of this life appear truly as they are, but thornes and bryars, to disturb the growth of my felicity; how sweet is their loss for thy gain? how easily, how willingly, how joyfully, how thankfully are all these foggy mists of ignorance and error happily dispersed, by the bright rayes of my ensuing glory.

Beside these fawning enemies of Peace, which flatter to unquietness, I am now able to incounter with those other which affright the soul even in their first appearances, and are able to deject the carnal man even to astonishment, and utterly to expose him to the tyranny of sin, and torture of punishment: such Lord is the vast difference between the blessed ones of thy fold, and those unhappy ones which stray from thee into the strange pastures of impiety.

No sorrow can surprise me but for sin, and even this too thou makest to increase my joy:

what afflictions can be evil, which is thy physick who art the fountain of all good? If it be grievous in the taste, it is joyous in the effects; if I mark the happy close, I must with joy confess, that these bitter storms will end in blessed calms, will bring to my remembrance those grievous sins that brought my Saviour to those bitter groans, will force me from the sorrows of this life, to my Celestial harbour, will bring me on my knees to see mine own vileness, will inrich me with the graces of humility and patience, and together with them the sweet injoyments of thy blessed Spirit; and if so, how can I complain of want, when instead of earth I enjoy heaven?

Lord, what can he fear that is assured of thy favour? afflictions, tribulations, crosses, sins, Satan, Death, Hell it self shall work to mine advantage: as my cross is more grievous, my crown shall be more glorious; where Sin and Satan have been most prevailing, there Grace and Goodness shall be more triumphing. How truly sweet Lord is the inviolable peace of thy Saints? who powerfully compellest even the very rage of earth and hell to work to their advantage. Lord sanctifie the trials of this life unto my sinful soul, that by my patient sufferings with my Saviour here, I may have peace with him, and by him hereafter.

I have hitherto looked on mine inward happiness; if I now cast mine eyes upon mine outward, I shall there see that all these outward blessings also are most peculiarly belonging to the Saints; the wicked ones of the world are robbers, and shall one day give an account of their theft; children, friends, strangers, even our very

very enemies, are protected, preserved, inriched, blessed for our sakes; so was *Joseph* and his brethren for *Jacob*, *Zoar* for *Lot*, *Potiphar* for *Joseph*, the Centurian and Soldiers for St. *Paul*: And if thou (Lord) wilt look so lovingly upon the children of this world for thine elect sake, how graciously wilt thou one day look upon those sons that shall be made partakers of thine own inheritance?

Who would not now be holy? seeing that in this blessed condition, there is not only safety inviolable, but peace unutterable, safety in life, and sweetness in death.

And now Lord, when I enquire for what cause thou givest me all this, I find nothing but thy meer love unto me; when I ask what thou requirest for all this, I hear thee demand nothing but the return of love: what is more easie, what more sweet, than love? and what object more amiable, than that glorious being that is the perfection of all love, and that love the beauty of all perfection? Thou canst not give, Lord, what thou hast not, the glory of thy creation is but a glimps of that greater glory of thine essence; Lord, who can deny thee Love? how sweet is this yoak, how light this burden! when I love thee, I enjoy thee, and my self in thee, I possess thee, I rest in thee for ever. O my God, all that thou givest me, all that thou requirest of me, is to make me happy, to thee be glory for ever. *Amen.*

Blessed Lord,

All this I joyfully confess thou hast done for me, and yet the whole course of my corrupt life hath been nothing else but a continued Rebellion against thee: mine Eyes full of Adultery, my

Tongue of Corrupt Communication, my Hands of Oppression, mine Ears open to Iniquity, my Heart full of hypocrisie, my feet lame in thy paths, and swift to walk in the ways of sinners, my whole man nothing else but the very body of death, and destruction.

I have sinned against precepts, against promises, against mercies, against judgments, against the checks of mine own conscience, and the blessed motions of thy holy Spirit; I have even tempted my temptations, by making daily and hourly provisions for sin; and have been so far from sorrowing for all this, that I have resolved to continue yet still. And yet so great is thy compassion towards me, that still thou storest up new mercies for me.

Lord, I bewail my wickedness; I lament my wilfulness, I abhor my filthiness; I heartily desire, and earnestly endeavour to unrip my soul, to ransack my heart, to unlock the very secrets of my thoughts, that I may have all my sins continually before me, even in their worst appearances; and I may loath them and leave them, and obtain thy gracious pardon for them.

I confess, Lord, that I am utterly unworthy to enjoy this blessed light, which I have so much abused to thy great dishonour; much more the light of Grace, by which thou leadest me to that of Glory; and that it were more just with thee, for ever to deprive me of these happy lights, and to expose me to the terrors of eternal darkness.

Lord, I have sinned, and cannot chuse but sin; I am a great and grievous sinner, and yet I am thy child; have pity upon me, have pity

upon

upon me, for I am in misery: into the bosom of thy tender love, I thrust my sinful soul for safety and protection.

O let not thy justice triumph in my ruin, but thy mercy in my deliverance, so shalt thou have the glory, and I the sweetness of mine eternal happiness.

Hear me, O Lord, and help me, for thy name sake, for thy promise sake, for thy Son's sake. Amen.

CHAP. II.

Upon the consideration of Divine Providence.

A Meditation for Noon.

Blessed God,

WIthout thy holy providence, no creature can subsist, by thine Almighty power they were created out of nothing, and if thou shouldst not sustain them, they must needs return to nothing: how wisely, how wonderfully doest thou guide and govern these inferiour creatures? All things are at once disposed of by thee, and move successively to their appointed ends: but above all, how graciously hast thou provided for the good of man? what varieties of food, how secretly, how sweetly disposed it to sustentation? No creature can be nourishing without thee, and with thee I enjoy not onely nutriment, but delectation: how sweet is this thy goodness to my body? how much more sweet thy mercy to my soul? and if thy temporal refreshments are so good, how ravishing is that celestial food, with which thy Saints and Angels are delighted?

Lord, how undeserving am I of these thy many favours? Thou giveſt rain to the earth, and it becometh fruitful; thou loadeſt me daily with thy blessings, and loe I am unthankful; even those creatures that are insensible, are daily nourisht into augmentation, and man alone, whom thou hast made to live for ever, contents himself with daily diminution.

This wofully appears by my deadness and dulness in my Christian calling, by my backwardness to holy Duties, by my careleſness and coldness in prayer, wearineſs in reading, irksomneſs in meditation, by my faint Hope, sick Faith, lukewarm Love, frozen Charity, lame Patience, languishing Zeal, and all those other visible decays of goodness, which are none other than the very symptoms of a dying soul.

Ah now, Lord! how miserably deformed must I needs appear in thy sight, that am thus ugly in mine own? Thou that hadſt compaſſion on me, when I was in my bloud, and then saidſt unto me, Live; that hast washed me clean from sin and pollution, and espouſed me into thine own bosom; wilt thou also love me in death? Wilt thou court me in the grave? How justly mightest thou for ever leave me to mine own ruin, that can so easily, so willingly forsake thee, for the pleasures of sin; and yet, how sweetly, how affectionately doeſt thou order all things for me? Even my very sins invite me to a more happy, to a nearer Union with thee.

To thee therefore, O my God, the life of my life, the very being, and assured comfort of my sinful soul, and wretched body, do I addreſs my self for mercy and forgiveneſs.

I

I confeß my self unworthy of thy gracious providence in ſuſtaining this frail and infirm body, much more unworthy (O Lord) of thine unſpeakable love, in reviving, relieving, imbracing my deformed ſoul.

Bleſſed Lord, who am I of whom thou art thus tenderly compaſſionate? when I was in the womb I was defiled with ſin, when I came out of it, I was covered with ſhame; the World bewitched me, the Fleſh beſotted me, the Devil beguiled me.

Lord, when no eye pitied me, then thou hadſt mercy on me; and now at laſt when I am run from thee, when I have adulterated my firſt Love, when I am become poor and wretched, and miſerable, and blind, and naked, thou freely forgiveſt me, thou calleſt me thy fair one, and giveſt me thy love.

O my God, I admire thy Goodneſs, I deplore and abhor mine own wretchedneſs: O let the ſweetneſs of thy love in Chriſt, inflame the dying ſparks of my benummed ſoul to praiſe thee without ceaſing.

Expatiate my narrow thoughts, with daily contemplation of my heavenly home, with joyful expectation of the ſweet fruition of Eternity; O give me ſuch a bleſſed raptaſie of ſoul, that I may live above the reach of humane miſery, and reign with thee hereafter in immortal glory.

CHAP. IV.

Upon the consideration of the sinfulness, shortness, and uncertainty of life.

A Meditation suited to the Evening.

Lord,

WHen I call to mind how many days have past me without bending of a knee, how many nights I have gone prayerless to bed, I may well wonder that I am this hour alive to speak unto thee: I have been too unmindful of thy holy providence, and am therefore utterly unworthy of thy merciful protection: Few, and full of evil have my days been in the house of my Pilgrimage, I know not how soon I may go hence, and yet I still live, as if I knew not why I came hither.

I am many ways invited to my heavenly home; how sweetly doest thou wean from the miseries of life; by the blessedness of death. By this Evenings rest of my body I am put in mind of that eternal rest of my soul: This days ending, tells me, that the end of all things is at hand, that the fashion of this world passeth, and that all things shall become new: As his hour is the Evening to this day, so this day (for ought I know) may be the Evening to my whole life; I cannot challenge to my self one minute more; how vain am I to promise days and years? Lord, in the whole current of thy sacred Story, I find but onely one, that durst presume upon so large a reckoning, and him thou brandest with the name of Fool: Let his folly (Lord) be my instruction, so shall I account

count each day my last, and neither care to live, nor fear to die.

How many have been snatcht out of this life, how suddenly, and to man's eye how fearfully? How unspeakable is thy mercy unto me, to spare me for repentance? how often and how earnestly hast thou invited me to mercy? how coldly, and how carelesly have I refused these thy gracious offers? still I sin, and still thou forgivest, and (which is the height of my impiety) I therefore am more and more evil against thee, because thou art more and more gracious unto me; and it were now most just with thee, even this very moment, to put a period to my sinful life.

Lord, let this teach me to improve the short remnant of my days to thy service, and that I may endeavour so to do, I will prescribe my self these following rules.

Each evening shall take a strict account of that days traffique for my soul, and where I find my self a loser, I will labour for supply. When I awake, my first thoughts shall begin with thee, from whom I have my first being: Nothing will more truly represent me to my self, than the first view of mine affections; if my first thoughts be seasoned with grace, my following actions will savour of goodness. My care shall be more to dress my soul, than to trim my body; I will think no pains too great, no ornaments too rich to make her beautiful. One devout sigh from a contrite heart, is of more worth (in thy sight) than an hours task of Lip-devotion. My affections are the soul of my words, without which, I speak only, but pray not: when my prayers are cold, my hopes

may well be comfortless. My set hours for Devotion shall be constant; no pretence of nature shall debar me of this happiness: The Lovers eyes are often glancing on the pleasing object that delights him; if my affections be sincere, my looks will be amarous; I shall often steal a sweet Ejaculation to satisfie the longing of my Love-sick soul. When I can thus bring the day to an end, my life will be comfortable, my death happy, and I may then say with holy *David*, that *I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest, for it is thou Lord onely that makest me dwell in safety.*

Blessed Lord, in the morning of my Creation thou gavest me unto my self; in the evening of my Redemption thou gavest thy self unto me: My Creation was wonderful, my Redemption astonishing. As this days light is obscured for the rest of my body, so wert thou the blessed and eternal Light for the rest of my soul. Thou, O blessed Saviour, art my light to direct me, my heat to comfort me, my sweet and safe repose eternally to refresh me.

Gracious God,

With humble and dejected heart I ask forgiveness of the many failings of my sinful life past, recall my sinful thoughts to my remembrance: Lord, as the burthen of them is intolerable, so let my grief for them be unutterable.

Lord, open mine eyes, that I may see the foulness, and the filthiness of sin, and apprehend the greatness of thy wrath against it.

Forgive those actual sins which this days light hath witnessed; Lord, give me a godly sorrow for them, a perfect hatred against them,

a

a fixed and a constant resolution to forsake them.

Lord, cleanse me from my secret and unknown sins, and keep me, for thy mercy sake, that daring and presumptuous sins may never have dominion over me.

Make me a careful Steward of that precious time which thou hast given me, withdraw my affections from the vain pleasures of this sinful life, and grant that all the days of my appointed time I may wait readily and chearfully until my change shall come.

CHAP. V.

Upon our approaching unto Gods House.

Lord,

THere is no mortal man worthy to stand at thy door, much less to appear in thy presence; and yet, how often have I presumed to approach unto thee, without that preparedness of heart, without that dejection of soul, without that true and holy reverence that becometh thy child.

I am now going out of *Egypt*, into *Canaan*, out of Bondage, into freedom: The sinful troubles of this life, are my souls Taskmasters, to load it with a burthen insupportable, and this is that place of sacrifice, that Mount of God, to ease and solace it.

Consider therefore, O my soul, in what relation thou now standest to thy God. If thou art a true *Israelite*, thou wilt look back upon thy drudgery, and despise it, and offer up thy self a living sacrifice with cheerfulness, with thankfulness of heart. If thou art Gods child, thou wilt love

love to be in Gods house; Long for Gods presence, thirst for his favour, delight in his word, and rejoyce to be often at his table: Thou wilt make it thy chiefest joy to be often in that place, from whence thou mayest expect thy chiefest good.

Lord, (by thy grace assisting) I will now uncloath my self of all earthly affections, I will call to mind unto whose presence I approach, and wherefore; that I am going from this Church Militant, to that Triumphant; that thou, Lord, art as truly present here in Grace, as there in glory (unless therefore I am in love with misery) I will leave behind me all earthly mindedness, and carry with me a pure heart, and heavenly thoughts, a lowly mind, and reverend gesture. Lord, if I go not cheerfully to thy Throne of Grace, I may well fear I shall never go joyfully to that of Glory.

The lowest Room in thy House shall content me, Divine Worship admitteth not of desparity of persons; we are all sinners, and (as we are in nature) most impure in thy sight, the worst Room in thy House is too good even for the best of us, yet decency of place may be taken with modesty, if not sought with emulation.

During the time of this holy dispensation, I will call my thoughts unto a strict attendance, and make it part of my precedent prayer, that I may. Satan is ever most busie, when our intentions are most holy; which when he cannot deliver, he labours to corrupt, and by this means when I desire to grow better, I become worse. How careful ought I to be to avoid his cunning, who can couzen me in my best actions?

My

My ſoul ſhall more delight it ſelf with the matter, than my Ears with the melody of thy ſacred Notes: Church muſick will be then truly ſweet unto me, when mine outward joy is ſubſervient to mine inward.

Mans ſinful weakneſs ſhall not make me ſlight thy holy Ordinance: If my Paſtor have failings, I will pity, and pray for him, but not deſpiſe him. If I look into my own Soul, I ſhall there find work enough to repair mine own ruines. This, Lord, ſhall rather move me to extol thy mercy, in upholding mine own ſteps, to lament the ſadneſs of my Brothers miſery, Lord, let me never think my ſelf better than another, becauſe I know not how ſoon I may become worſe.

I ſhall willingly continue in that Fold where thou haſt placed me, and hope to remain there with comfort, till thou ſhalt lead me out with ſafety. While I am at thy feeding, I am happy; one of thy morſels well digeſted with humility and thankfulneſs, will yield me better nouriſhment than that other food of mine own finding. The very meaneſt of thy Miniſters may afford me Patience, and that heavenly Grace, with thy bleſſing to boot, is a great advantage. If I receive thy ſacred Word with cheerfulneſs, with earneſtneſs of heart, my obedience ſhall be accepted, my zeal rewarded.

While I am within thy walls, I ſhall account that geſture moſt decent, that is moſt humble, and thoſe Ceremonies moſt neceſſary, that are moſt ſuitable to obedience; all matters of Doctrine (which are neceſſary to Salvation) ought to be guided by the ſacred Word, which is the only

only rule of faith; all matters of Discipline (which are necessary only to obedience) are therefore left to thy Churches care; that as thou art one, so thy Church may be one, in that blessed union of love, which is the bond of peace.

And now, O Lord, if thou shalt call me to a strict account for all the misdemeanours in thy sacred Worship, with what confusion of face must I needs appear before thee?

How many evil suggestions? how many idle imaginations? how many sinful Objects have I often entertained, to divert my thoughts from thy service?

I have too often sinned in absenting thy House, but more often and more grievously in frequenting it, by coming carelesly and out of custom, by unbeseeming gestures, cold prayers, heartless hearing, profane scoffing, curious censuring, and even in the best of my performances, by serving thee my God by halves; all this I heartily bewail, and earnestly desire thy pardon and forgiveness for it.

Lord, let this days rest of my body, bring to my remembrance, that eternal rest of my soul; let me not now think mine own thoughts, speak mine own words, do mine own actions, but come before thee with a sanctified and humble soul, with a wounded and contrite spirit.

Repel all evil suggestions, remove all idle imaginations, divert all sinful objects, enlighten mine understanding, rectify my will, strengthen my memory, subdue mine affections, that I may rejoyce in thy love, delight in thy Law, long for thy presence, rely on thy promises, thirst for thy grace, and be for ever blessed in thy glory. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Upon our returning from Gods House, and the neglect of private duties.

Lord,

HE that knoweth thee, will undoubtedly delight to serve thee; If I call thy Sabbath a delight, my thoughts in this day will be pure, my words gracious, mine actions holy: That soul which cannot joyfully familiarize it self with thee in this life, may well be fearful to be seen of thee in that to come.

When I seriously consider what a rich favour I enjoy, how great a distance I am at from thee my God, how sweet a mercy thou affordest me to speak unto thee, I cannot but confess mine own unworthiness, if I regard not what I hear, if I rejoyce not to recal thy blessed words to my remembrance.

How dreadful was that voice that spake in thunder! and how severe the words that then were spoken! how blessed is this still musick of the Gospel! and how delightful to my wounded spirit! Lord, let this raise my soul above the reach of earthly vanities, let this encourage me to heavenly cheerfulness, in heavenly duties, to be joyful in reading, fervent in prayer, frequent in meditation, constant in all. That knowledge will make wofully wise, which teacheth me to know, and not to do thy will. Meditation is the life of hearing. Practice the life of Meditation, and a sincere heart the life of practice.

When

When I look into my life past, I find it to be all sin; when I consider of my life present, I cannot but confess it to be all shame; I am still so far from growing better, that I am become much worse; this is that blessed day which concerneth my peace, if I embrace not this happy opportunity, I may justly fear these gracious offers will be hid for ever from mine eyes, each word, that I heard this day, is of weight; if I become not more holy by my heavenly improvements by it, I shall certainly become sinful by my careless neglecting of it. Thy work, O Lord, will have its end, and this end (either to my happiness or ruin) shall assuredly promote thy glory; there is no vacuity in nature, with thee, the God of nature, there can be none.

Think therefore, O my soul, that this days instruction may be thy last (as thou hopest) for heaven, let it not pass thee without some profit: Consider seriously, how many millions of worlds one lost soul would give to be restored to thy condition, that to morrow thou mayest be an one of them, and then judge how great will be thy folly, how woful thy misery, if thou triflest with those sacred Counsels which concern thy rest.

O thou God of infinite compassions, look not upon those infinite failings of my sinful nature, but behold me in the beauty and perfection of thy blessed Son.

Teach me, O Lord, to set the rebellion of mine own wicked heart by his perfect obedience, my sinfulness by his righteousness, my misery by his mercy.

For-

Forgive my many and sinful compliances of nature, which have made me a stranger to thy graces, and mine own happineß.

The great neglect of mine obedience unto thy commands, hath justly called for the great and heavy load of mine afflictions; the careleß withdrawing of mine affections from thee my God, hath occaßioned the sad departings of thy holy Spirit from me.

O that my loß of tears might now prevail with thee, to repair the loß of my preßence in my sinful soul: Lord let the greatneß of my folly in sinning, extol the richneß of thy mercy in forgiving.

Reßore me to the joy of thy Salvation, and ßabliß me with thy free Spirit; ßo ßhall I have the comfort, and thou the praiße of my deliverance.

If thou Lord, wilt give me underßanding to delight in thy Law, I ßhall alßo have a ßweet aßßurance, that thou wilt delight in me to do me good.

Accept of my deßires, ßtrengthen my endeavours, perfect my performances, pardon my weakneß, aßßiß my willingneß, forgive my ßinfulneß, nouriß the good motions of thy holy Spirit in me, and for thy mercies ßake remove all dangers, and temptations from me; that when the ßhort and wretched race of my imperfect holineß is ended here, I may ßolemnize that eternal Sabbath with the bleßed Saints and Angels in thy Kingdom, and reß with thee in perfection of true happineß for evr. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Upon the want of due Preparation for receiving of the blessed Sacrament of the Lords Supper.

Lord,

WHen I look upon the inestimable value of that gift which I am this day to receive, when I consider of the Majesty of thee the Givet, of the misery of me the Receiver, of the vast difference between corruption and eternity, of thy strict commands for preparation to the Passeover under thy Law, of thy blessed precepts for due receiving of thy Sacrament under the Gospel, of thine own example in washing thy Disciples feet, and thereby symbolizing the eternal washing of their souls; of thy Saints practice in their solemn preparations unto holiness by pulling off their shoes when they approached thy presence; of thy severe judgments against *Uzza*, for heedless touching of thine Ark; against those rash *Corinthians*, whereof (for want of holy preparation) some were weak, some sick, some fallen asleep; and lastly, of that dreadful sentence against unworthy comers to thy Wedding Feast, pronounced by thine own mouth, I tremble at my bold approaches to thy blessed Table, I wonder at thy goodness, that I am yet alive to say there is yet mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

How many blessed opportunities of coming to thy Table have I sinfully neglected! How many abused, by my sinful resort thither, by my wandring and idle thoughts there, by my wicked and profane actions after I returned thence.

Lord,

Lord, wilt thou ſtill ſuffer me to abuſe thy goodneſs? How long Lord, how long ſhall I wander in theſe woful ways of wickedneſs? I am weary of the ſins and miſeries of this life, and willing to embrace this heavenly comfort for my ſoul. I confeſs my ſelf a great and grievous ſinner, and yet I know Lord, thou cameſt not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance: I am hungry, and poor, and blind, and naked, and miſerable, deſtitute of all hope, of all help, but from thee alone; Lord I am unworthy of thy crums, yet thou admitteſt me to thy Table; the ſinfulneſs of my corrupt nature had made a woful ſeparation between us, but the richneſs of thy ſufferings hath for ever made a ſweet conjunction of us; all my ſins are thine, all thy righteouſneſs is mine, thou art now my well beloved, and I am thy choſen one, and in this bleſſed Union is my ſweet and ſafe repoſe for ever.

Who can enough deplore that no more than woful ſeparation? Who can enough admire this more than wonderful conjunction? this more then happy reconciliation? Here is Juſtice undeniable, Mercy incomprehenſible, Wiſdom unutterable, Love unimitable.

O let my ſoul now loſe it ſelf in the unknown paths of heavenly contemplation; let me this day apprehend thee (O my Saviour) faſting, praying, weeping, groaning, ſweating, bleeding, fainting, dying, for my ſake, and now pleading to my God for mercy for me: Let me now taſt the ſweetneſs of that mercy by a lively faith, the fulneſs of this ſweetneſs by a bleſſed hope, the fruition of this fulneſs by eternal Love.

Lord

Lord, how unworthy am I of these embraces, if I bewail not, if I abhor not, if I forsake not all the wretched failings of my sinful life past; if I rejoyce not with joy unspeakable, and glorious, to be admitted to so great a mercy; if this inflame not mine affections with unspotted love to thee my God, with earnest longings for thy presence of Grace in this life, of Glory in that to come.

And now, Lord, since thou in thy rich love hast freely forgiven me my pounds, I will also most willingly and heartily forgive my Brother his pence; I will have nothing to do with malice, that had so much need of mercy: I will unfeignedly, and freely, and fully forgive all injuries on Earth; I will love all those that hate me, and pray for all those that despightfully use me; and all this for thy sake who hast freely loved me, and laid down thy life for me, to whom be Glory for ever. *Amen.*

Blessed Lord God,

Look down in mercy and compassion on me, thy poor distressed supplicant, whom thou now vouchsafest to admit unto thy heavenly Banquet; Illuminate my blindness by the blessed light of thy most sacred word, satisfie my hunger with the sweet refreshings of thy gracious presence, inrich my poverty with the gifts and graces of thy holy Spirit; cover my nakedness with the precious robes of thine own righteousness; swallow up the depths of my misery by the height of thy mercy, that I may this day appear before thee with a sincere heart, and happy soul.

Lord, strengthen and support my feeble faith, make me joyfully to trust in thee, constantly to rely

vely upon thee, thankfully to sacrifice my soul in praises to thee. Amen.

Vouchsafe, dear Lord, that I may worthily approach thy blessed Table, that I may this day be so united to thee, that all my joy and comfort may hereafter be for ever with thee. Amen.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing pious Ejaculations at the time of Receiving.

Lord,

Thou art that blessed Bread, by which my soul is nourisht to eternal life; thou art that fruitful Vine, from which doth flow those gladding comforts to my fainting spirit.

Thou were broken for my sins, thou were bruised for my transgressions, and the chastisment of my peace was upon thee: Lord, by thy stripes let my sinful soul be healed.

Thou tookest into thy hands the cup of trembling, thou drunkest out the very dregs thereof, and thy precious blood was poured out like water for my sake.

Sweet Jesu sustain me by this Bread, refresh me with this wine, recover me with this Potion, cleanse me by this Effusion, that I may this day receive joyfully, return thankfully, live righteously, and die happily.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Containing a brief Meditation, and pious Thanksgiving after our Receiving.

I am this day joyfully delivered from the bondage of Sin and Satan, and happily restored into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; I have relished the sweetness of his heavenly promises, and received the seal of his gracious performances; I now enjoy that blessed Peace of God which passeth all our understanding. My deliverance is wonderful, my freedom absolute, my peace unalterable, my joy unutterable: My conscience is now quieted, my spirit ravished, mine enemies vanquished, and my God well-pleased.

To thee therefore, O thou blessed Fountain of Eternal sweetness, do I address my joyful soul, to love and honour thee to my lives end. Lord Jesus accept of me, and so powerfully and graciously assist me, that I may strongly behold thee in thy blessed promises, that I may happily enjoy thee in thy holy Ordinances; that I may clearly see, and joyfully confess what great things thou hast done for my poor soul; that I may be daily ravished with apprehension of thine exceeding love, and hourly busied with recounting thy endless praise.

Lord, make me to forsake the sins and miseries of this life; make me more watchful over my corrupt heart, more zealous of thy glory and thy children's good; that I may never willingly offend thee, but wholly sacrifice the short remainder

der of my days unto thee; that so my heart and my flesh may triumphantly rejoyce in thee the living God.

Mortifie my corruptions, support my weakness, accept my willingness: Let this my humiliation before thee, be a pleasing sacrifice unto thee, for his alone sake, whose precious life thy rich mercy hath sacrificed to thy Justice for me. Lord hear me, have mercy on me for his alone sake whom thou hast freely given unto me, that I may truly love thee, devoutely serve thee, earnestly imbrace thee, eternally injoy thee. Amen.

CHAP. X.

Upon a Journey undertaken, and the many dangers incident thereunto.

I Am now going for mine own home, and know not whether I shall ever return; God I know hath set a period to my days, beyond which I cannot pass, but when, or where, or how my life shall end, I am uncertain. Many are the dangers that attend this sinful life, and many more my sins that have deserv'd them, I can neither number the one, nor foresee the other, this is the wretched, and the sad condition of my body, and (without unfeigned sorrow of my sins,) the much more woful case of my distressed soul.

Lord, there is nothing so sweet as thy love, nothing so safe as thy protection, and yet I have carelessly neglected the one, and thou mayest not justly deny me the other; thou hast woo'd me to mercy, and I have refused to come; thou hast graciously invited me by thy continual

prefer-

preſervations, by thy fatherly ſuſtentations, by thy gentle corrections, by thy faithful promiſes, and thy rich performances.

Bleſſed Lord, how wonderful are thy compaſſions towards me, when I am unthankful for thy many favours, when I am unmindful of mine own miſeries, even then thou graciouſly provideſt for me, and yet for all this, I have not hitherto reſolved ſeriouſly to come unto me.

Such, and ſo many are my ſins, ſo great is my unthankfulneſs, that I now tremble to appear before thee; and yet ſo tender is thy mercy to me, that thou again allureſt me to comfort and contentment. Lord, into the bleſſed boſom of thy love I caſt my ſelf for ſafety and protection, and in the midſt of danger, even in death it ſelf will joyfully rely upon thee.

For thou, O Lord, art my ſtrong rock and fortreſs, unto which I will always reſort: Lord keep me as the apple of thine eye, hide me under the ſhaddow of thy wings.

Strengthen my weak faith againſt the ſtrong aſſaults of Satan; ſupport and comfort me in all the fears and terrors of mine own accuſing conſcience; protect and keep me in this preſent journey; let thy holy Angels be my bleſſed Guardians, to protect me in life, to preſerve me in death, to aſſiſt me after death.

O let me never grieve thoſe bleſſed Spirits (which though inviſible, yet more aſſuredly are my attendants?) Lord, as thou haſt given them readineſs and cheerfulneſs of mind to watch my preſervation, and further my ſalvation, ſo give me carefulneſs and conſtancy of ſoul to joy them in my life and converſation.

And

And seeing, Lord, I cannot know my hour of dissolution, O teach me so to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto heavenly wisdom; that I may obtain a sweet assurance of thy love in Christ; unfeigned sorrow for my sins, a sincere and constant heart to thy service, and a chearful readiness at thy Call. Amen.

CHAP. X.

Containing Pious Meditations, and zealous Ejaculations after a Journey.

I Am now by Gods gracious providence returned safe unto mine earthly home, but am still travelling to my heavenly. There is nothing in this life but labour and sorrow, nothing in that but rest and happiness, and yet, I dote upon the one, and neglect the other. Lord, if my treasure were with thee, my heart would be there also: When thou giveſt me more knowledge of thee, I shall have more desire to come unto thee: When my sins have made me more sensible of mine own misery, thy Grace (I trust) will make me more capable of thy sweet mercy.

Lord, if this vain unquietness be so refreshing to thy mortal body, how truly blessed will thy heavenly rest be to mine immortal soul? When thou, Lord, wilt wipe away all tears from mine eyes, all akings from my heart; when there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain; when soul and body shall triumphantly and joyfully repose themselves in thee for ever; when they

ſhall drink freely of the rivers of thy pleaſures, and be for ever ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe.

I confeſs my ſelf unworthy to enjoy this outward reſt in this mine earthly home, much more unworthy to enjoy that inward reſt, that ſweet aſſurance of a lively hope, to be partaker of eternal reſt. How wretched is my body without this outward quietneſs? How much more wretched is my ſoul without thee? Thou, O Lord, art my ſhield, to defend me, my ſtaff, to uphold me, my food to ſuſtain me, my wine to glad me, my beloved to embrace me, my pleaſure to delight me, my joy to raviſh me, my ſweet and ſafe repoſe for ever to refreſh me.

Let this teach me, (O Lord) to fix my thoughts on heaven and heavenly things; to uſe this world ſoberly in thee, and to thee; to view it (truly as it is) a barren Wilderneſs, a tranſitory, vain, and empty thing, far inconſiſtent with my real happineſs; to deſire nothing, to enjoy nothing in the Creature, but only in, and unto thee the great Creator; ſo ſhall no vain pleaſure bewitch me, no unjuſt profit beguile me, no ſudden ſorrow diſmay me, no terrors of Conſcience affright me.

To thee, O thou ſoveraign of my ſoul, do I devote the remnant of my ſinful days, to love thee, to praiſe thee, to honour thee, to reſt in thee for ever.

Lord, wean me from the ſins and miſeries of this life, and raiſe my thoughts to immortality: Let the ſweetneſs of thy heavenly joys relieve the barſhneſs of my worldly ſorrows, that miſery may be ſwallowed up of mercy and frailty of eternity.

Unite

Unite me in a blessed union with thee, that I may constantly adhere unto thee, and be for ever graciously accepted of thee: O give me a sweet complacency of soul in thy service, and a willing and a dutiful obedience, unto thy commands.

Lord, give me a thankful heart for all thy mercies to me, for thy continual preservation, for thy blessed supportation, for the enjoyment of thy needful comforts in this life, and for the glorious hopes of those in that to come.

Blessed God, so sublimate my sinful soul, that I may see the richness of thy love in Christ, that I may soberly enjoy thy blessings here, and faithfully expect thy joys hereafter.

Lord, all that I have without thee, is meer emptiness, and nothing, meer vanity, and worse than nothing; my glory, shame; mine honor, ignominy; my health, ruin; my riches, poverty; my gain, loss; my pleasure, pain; my laughter, madness.

Thou, O Lord, art all in all unto me, O grant that nothing may withdraw thy service from thee; that no inticing pleasure may allure me, that no distracting Care, or sinful sorrow may disturb me, but that my soul may now and ever safely and contentedly rely upon thee.

Lord, thou seest all my desires, and my continual groanings are not hid from thee: Thou alone knowest how weary I am of the sinful travels of this life, how earnestly I long to be at rest with thee; Lord pardon all my sins, and put an end to all my miseries: Come Lord Jesus, come quickly, wipe away all tears from mine eyes, and bring me to the rest of thine which never shall have end. Amen.

CHAP. XII.

Upon the great danger of Security.

DEceive not thy self, O my Soul, it is not so easie a matter to inherit heaven, as thou imagineſt; there will be much fighting, ſweating, bleeding, much compunction of ſoul, ſubjection of body, hard preſſing towards the mark, for the price of the high calling in Chriſt Jeſus, before this happy conqueſt can be gained.

Conſider therefore in what condition thou now ſtandeſt, what ground thou haſt gained of thy corrupt nature, how much better thou art this day, than the day paſt, than the year paſt, than thy whole life paſt; nay, rather how much worſe by adding ſin unto ſin, by drinking in iniquity like water, by treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of thy righteous Judgment.

Philoſophy will tell thee, that in all natural motions, the nearer they are to ending, the more violent their motion is: Divinity will tell thee, that in old age, thou wilt be fat, and well-liking: What increaſe of love haſt thou to Gods Law? what groweth of hatred againſt ſin? what boſom-ſin haſt thou parted with? what gracious improvement haſt thou made in knowledge, faith, repentance, love, and all thoſe other gifts and graces, which concur to thy perfection?

Holy Saint *Anſelm* was often heard to ſay, *If I could from hence behold the pains of hell, from thence the horror of ſin, I would rather embrace*

thoſe

thoſe pains, than this horrour: O what growth of grace was here! how far am I from this degree of holineſs? how eaſily perſwaded to delude my ſelf with ſhews and ſhadows of perfection? There is no attaining unto happineſs without holy violence, without bearing down my body, without cheriſhing my ſoul; if I conquer not here, I cannot triumph hereafter.

Lord, when I look into the ſtrictneſs of the lives of thy Saints, I much lament the folly of mine own; I ſee holy *David* in ſackcloth and aſhes, conſuming whole days and nights in mourning for ſin, waſhing his bed with his tears, afflicted in body, tormented in ſoul, grieving, crying, roaring, for unquietneſs of heart. Bleſſed *Paul* ſubduing his body, by faſting, watching, praying, toyling in the Miniſtry, and thou, my bleſſed Saviour, in continual labour and ſorrow for my ſake: how vain is my truſt, how falſe my hope, how great my errour, to believe I run, when I ſtand ſtill? to expect a triumph without a victory, a victory without a combat. Lord, if many that ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, yet, ſhall not be able: what ſhall become of me? who are ſo far from coming to thee, that I every day am running from thee; who am not only oppoſite unto thee, but even enmity it ſelf againſt thee.

Sometimes I feel the ſtings and gripings of a wounded conſcience, I know my ſelf to be a grievous ſinner, but I quiet my diſturbances by thee my Saviour, I willingly accept of mercy from thee, but grudgingly repine at ſervice to thee; thou biddeſt me indeed to drink freely of the waters of life, but thou commandeſt me

alſo to make my calling and election ſure, to work out my ſalvation with fear and trembling; thou ordaineſt not the end without the means; if I rebelliouſly neglect the one, thou mayeſt moſt righteouſly deny me the other: Lord, what can it profit me to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, when I deprive my ſoul of happineſs for ever?

O let this teach me to deplore my dangerous condition, to go on chearfully in the ways of godlineſs, to think no coſt too much, no pains too great, no grief too good, to purchaſe Heaven; to conſider ſeriouſly, that time once paſt can never be recall'd, that this hour may be my laſt, and bring me to eternity of torments; where the ſtream is ſtilleſt, there the channel is deepeſt; where there is leaſt diſtruſt, there is uſually moſt danger, Satan therefore diſturbs me not, becauſe I ſleep in death: But when thou Lord, ſhalt open mine eyes to ſee the Subtility of this Deceiver, I ſhall then find, that *the waters* (of ſin) *are gone over my ſoul*, that I am wofully drowned in the great depth of ſecurity, and can expect nothing (without mercy) but Satans cruelty, and mine own endleſs miſery.

To that ſweet mercy therefore I appeal, with earneſtneſs of ſoul, and humbleneſs of heart, bemoaning my ſins, bewailing my Tranſgreſſions.

O Lord my God, when I conſider of thy gracious goodneſs, and mine own vileneſs, I am utterly aſhamed to appear in thy preſence.

Thou haſt often called me to repentance, but I have not hearkned unto thee, thou haſt lovingly invited me to mercy, but I have wilfully refuſed;

fused; thou hast clothed me with thine own garments, and I have shamefully defiled it; thou hast enriched me with thy grace, and I have robbed thee of thine honour. All this, and infinitely more than this, thou hast freely done for me, the worst of sinners, and yet for all this I have rebelliously forsaken thee, and most ungraciously been most unmindful of thee.

And now, Lord, seeing that I am dead and putrified in sins, and rotten in corruptions, what else can I expect from thee, but to be buried out of thy sight? and yet thou still sayest unto me, live.

O thou blessed Fountain of eternal good, convey those happy streams of comfort to my sinful soul, that may revive me from the grave of misery: open mine eyes, that I may see thee in thy long patience, in thy great goodness, in thy rich mercies, in thy fatherly affections towards me.

I am wofully sunk into the deep mire of sin, where no stay is; Lord, uphold me by thy grace, that I perish not eternally; O deliver me for thy mercy sake, for I am helpless and poor, and my heart is wounded within me.

Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee, and and thy judgments shall help me.

As thou hast raised me by thy power, so rule me by thy providence, that thy grace may be far sweeter with my sufferings, than my pleasure with my sins.

Restrain my loose desires, renew my good purposes, assist my weak endeavours, correct mine errours, sustain my infirmities; give me a godly sorrow for my sins, and a thankful heart for thy favours, a filial fear of thy judgments, a sincere

love to thy Laws, an holy constancy, and happy perseverance to my lives end. Amen.

CHAP. XIII.

Upon the great danger of Presumption.

ALas, my soul, how vain art thou, how wretched, to presume upon the mercy of thy God? how canst thou be so foolish to believe; that God will favour thee in that which he so severely punished in his own Son? thinkest thou that precious bloud was spilt to cherish sin? Be not mistaken, for as Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, so he came also to call sinners to repentance. Doest thou argue well, to say, because God is merciful, long-suffering, and of great goodness, therefore I will abuse his mercy in sinning, his patience by my long continuing in sin, his great goodness by my great unthankfulness? is not this to mock his mercy, to bid defiance to justice, to arm him with fury, to invite him to revenge? Assure thy self, the longer he is in drawing his Bow, the more forcible will he send his Arrow.

Deceive not thy self therefore, God will not be so merciful to thee, as to be unjust to himself; all the ways of God are Mercy and Truth; Mercy to support thy weakness, Truth to correct thy wilfulness: There is therefore Mercy with him, that he may be feared, not that he may be slighted, not that he may be shamefully dishonoured: How full of falshood is thy bold presumption? thou cryest Peace, Peace, when suddain War is ready to destroy thee;

thee; *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God*; Heaven and Earth are up in Arms against thee, and there is none left, not so much as thine own Conscience to deliver thee.

Thou hast graciously received the knowledge of the truth, thou hast grievously sinned against the light of that knowledge, thou hast wofully continued in thy sins, without remorse of conscience, without desire of repentance, and there now remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and violent fire, that should devour the Adversaries.

O remember, that the Angels, for one sin, were thrown down from Heaven, and that *Adam*, for one sin, was cast out of Paradise: Thy sins (O my soul) are innumerable, thou hast had line upon line, and precept upon precept, and yet, thou addest sin upon sin, and transgression upon transgression: Thou hast sinned against many precious promises, against many gracious performances, against many fearful judgments; thou hast grieved that good Spirit, by which the Saints are sealed up unto the day of redemption: All these are heavy aggravations upon thee, to fill up the measure of thy sins, and hasten the swiftness of thy punishments.

Ah, how sad is thy condition! thou hast not only wearied out thy self in wickedness, but thy God also: hear what he saith unto thee, how he complaineth of thee; by his holy Prophet, *Behold I am pressed under you, as a Cart is laden with sheaves*, Amos 2. 13. and yet thou still addest more load; but as thou addest sin upon sin, so thou callest for wrath upon wrath; as thou hast made a mock at sin, so God will make

a mock at misery; as thou hast thy measure in sinning, so God will have his measure in punishing: Consider what he saith unto thee by his Prophet, *Judgment will I lay to the Rule, and Righteousness to the Ballance*, Isa. 21. 17, 18. As he hath a bottle for thy tears, so he hath a bag for thy transgressions, *Job* 14. 17. their growth is recorded, their number accounted, their nature examined, all sealed up against the great and fearful day of the revelation of the righteous judgment.

O consider this, thou that forgettest God, lest he tear thee in pieces, and there be none to deliver thee: Think how suddainly thou mayest be snatcht away by those infernal Fiends, to endless torments, and then what tears will be enough to weep thine obsequies, to quench those everlasting burnings? But then, alas, instead of tears of compassion, thou shalt have mocks of derision, the cursed Devils will laugh thee to scorn, the blessed Saints and Angels will rejoyce at thy confusion, and God himself, who only can relieve thee, will for ever hide his tender mercy from thee.

Awake therefore out of thy sleep of death, look well into thy lost estate, thou art now near unto making up the measure of thy sins, beyond which thou canst not pass: Thy God hath said to thee, as to the Sea, hitherto shalt thou go, and here shalt thou stay thy proud waves. Think how suddainly thou mayest be called to thy last account, even this very hour, (for ought thou knowest) those cursed Spirits may convey thee to thy fiery Prison. O think how powerfully the wrath of God will then

seize

seize upon thee; how wofully thou wilt excruciate thy self, with apprehension of thy former folly; and last of all, how wretchedly thou art for ever banisht from eternal joys, to suffer with the damned in eternal torments: Let this move thee to amend thy wicked ways, to cry mightily to God for mercy, to judge thy self, to condemn thy self, that thou mayest not be judged of the Lord; to *Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and so thou perish from the right way: If his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* (*Turn therefore*) *unto the Lord thy God* (*O my soul*) *for he is gracious, mercifull, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

Blessed Lord,

As an unfeigned sign of my repentance, in anguish of heart, and bitterness of soul, I earnestly desire to search into the secrets of my sinful thoughts, to unbosom all my sins, and lay them open to the view of all thy Saints, that thou mayest have the glory, they the good, and I the shame of my confession, that so this penitent sense of mine iniquities (*which I thankfully acknowledge cometh alone from thee*) *may be an evidence unto me, that thou wilt also give me pardon for them.*

Lord, I willingly confess my self to be a great and grievous sinner, mine original defiled, my birth polluted, mine infancy stained, my youth insnared, my manhood corrupted, mine age besotted.

Mine imaginations vain, my thoughts sinful, my words wicked, mine actions abominable, my whole life a very sink of sin and all uncleanness.

When

When thy hand hath been heavy upon me, I have then promised the amendment; when thy rod hath been taken off from me, I have again returned to mine evil courses; this plainly sheweth, that I have hitherto sought but my self in thee, and may therefore justly fear to be forsaken of thee.

I have been undutiful to thee my God, envious and uncharitable to my Neighbour, hypocritical to the World, deceitful to mine own soul.

My thoughts have been wanton, my desires lascivious, my actions unclean.

I have been blind to thy precepts, deaf to thy promises, dumb in thy praises, lame in thy services, sick at thine ordinances, dead to thy imbraces.

I have broken all my promises, I have slighted all thy threatnings, I have abused all thy mercies, I have rejected all thy favours, I have delayed my repentance, I have resisted the checks of mine own conscience, I have quenched the motions of thy blessed Spirit, and turned thy grace into wantonness; and yet, as if all this had been too little to condemn me, I have most daringly presumed on thy mercy, and most ungraciously resolved to go on in my impieties.

Lord, thou hast promised to forgive those that repent, to ease those that are heavy laden, to raise up those that are fallen, to satisfie those that are hungry, and to bind up those that are broken hearted.

O Lord my God, I earnestly desire to repent, I am laden with a burthen insupportable, I am feeble and sore smitten with the terrors of thy Law, my flesh trembleth, and my heart fainteth;

I am fallen into the very mouth of hell, I am sorely wounded with the remorse of mine own accusing conscience, and hungry for the sweet refreshings of thy saving grace.

Thou, O Lord, hast made me sensible of this my great misery, and thou alone canst make me capable of thy rich mercy; unto that mercy therefore I appeal, with sighs in my soul, and sorrow in my heart.

O thou which art the blessed fountain of all goodness, which desirest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live, have mercy upon me.

O thou which art the Saviour of the World, which camest to seek, and to save those which were lost, have mercy upon me.

O holy, and for ever blessed Spirit, thou which feedest and refreshest the distressed souls of thine Elect, have mercy on me.

Let thy power (O blessed Father) support my weakness; thy wisdom (O blessed Son) supply my folly; thy love (O blessed Spirit) restrain my wilfulness; that as thou art eternally one, so I may for ever be at unity with thee, although most wofully divided in my self.

Lord, as thou hast given me a heart to pray unto thee, so give me also a soul to praise thee, and a serious resolution to perform those promises I make unto thee.

Lord sweeten all my sorrows by thy blessed sufferings, inlarge my heart with thankfulness for thy many favours, strengthen my weak faith, restrain my rebellious nature, increase daily in me the gifts and graces of thy blessed spirit; indue me with a perfect hatred against all sin; and

grant

grant, dear God, that daring and presumptuous sins may never have dominion over me. Amen.

CHAP. XIV.

Upon Quenching the motions of Gods holy Spirit.

COnsider, O my soul, from whence these happy thoughts arise; and wherefore, if they were from nature, they must needs savour of corruption, but now they are from Grace, they summon thee to goodness, they becken thee to immortality: Thy God now calleth thee to repentance; he offers thee his gracious pardon for thy sin; his love, his protection, his peace; his grace, his glory: He now woeth thee to favour, and thou (a woful wretch) convicted by thine own accusing conscience, condemned by divine Justice, rebelliously rejectest all these gracious offers: Ah, what woful folly is this! nay, rather what wilful madness! As there is a time of calling, so there will be a time of rejecting; the blessed wind of Gods holy Spirit bloweth but where it listeth; when it is once gone, thou knowest not whether it shall ever return: *God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardneth*, Rom. 9. Ah woe be unto that soul whose time of calling is once past, a thousand worlds cannot redeem its loss, if thou wilt not now embrace these comfortable breathings of his tender love, thou shalt then endure the bitter storms of his incensed wrath.

If thou wilt not embrace his mercy, thou shalt exalt his Justice: *I called unto you* (saith God) *and ye refused to come, I held out my hand,*

and

and ye would not look towards me; therefore will I forsake you in your extremity, when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me, Prov. 1. 24, 27, 28.

Gods clemency and patience in this life, will assuredly exasperate his fury and revenge, in that to come; as his mercy is unutterable, so his justice is intolerable, both are his divine being, and therefore both must needs be infinite; both are to manifest his glory, and therefore both must be eternal.

From hence is that expression of Saint *Paul*, *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. 10. From hence it is, that wicked men are left unto their own swing in this life, that they may be pay'd home with Gods wrath in that to come.

Let this teach thee, O my soul, to welcome these endeared motions of the gladding Spirit, to thirst for them, to rejoyce in them, to think no thought too dear to be dislodged for them.

Blessed Lord, I hear thee calling thy holy Apostle Saint *Peter*, and I see him readily forsaking all to follow thee; how often hast thou called me a sinful wretch, by the sweet motions of thy blessed Spirit; and I have hitherto refused to forsake the very least of all my sins, for thy sake, who willingly forsookest all the pleasures of this life for mine: Long hast thou waited my repentance, but I have yet hated to be reformed. Mercy hath been offered, and I have

have not esteemed it, Judgment hath been threatned, and I have not regarded it; thou hast not only whispered unto me by thy gracious visits of thy blessed Spirit, but thou hast even called me aloud, by thy divine hand of wholsome chastisement: By loss of friends, by loss of means, by loss of health, by loss of liberty; and (without thy rich mercy) by the great danger of that greater loss of thy Gospel, and thereby of thy gracious presence in this life, and thine eternal joys in that to come. All this my sins have justly brought upon me, and yet for all this, my wretched heart desires to be a stranger to thee.

Lord, who am I that thou so graciously inviteſt unto mercy? Lord, what am I that now presume to speak unto thee? I am so deformed, and contemptible, that mine own knowledge cometh far short of mine own misery. O how justly mighteſt thou for ever leave me to my self, to eat the fruit of mine own ways, and to be filled with the falshood of mine own devices, to possess sorrow, and inherit shame? But thou, O Lord, who art infinite in goodness, hast manifested to my sinful soul, that when I wretchedly forsake thee, thou readily forsakeſt all to follow me; when I run from thee, thou bewaileſt me; when misery compels me to return, thou joyfully receiveſt me, thou lovingly relieveſt me, thou then graciously accepteſt of me; And now, O Lord, when I have even wearied out thy mercy and compassion towards me, thou still inviteſt me to come unto thee.

To thee therefore, O thou blessed Shepheard of my soul, do I devote these penitent expressions: O

let

let those tributary tears, which are due to thy sufferings, be now plentifully poured forth for mine own sins. Lord pardon my contempt of grace, and graciously enable me to entertain these happy visits of thy holy Spirit, and patiently to bear these sweet chastisements of thy heavenly hand, that I may have fellowship with Christ, and peace with God.

If thou, Lord, for the sins of my prosperity, shalt think it fit to bring upon me the miseries of adversity, for the great neglect of thy gracious visits, to deny me the sweet comforts of thy blessed answers, yet give me patience, & sure confidence to trust still in thy mercy, that so while I am most justly debarred of my longing desires, I may not be utterly deprived of thy loving favours.

Lord, cast me not away from thy presence, O leave me not unto my self, lest I perish everlastingly; make me to see the richness of thy love and favour towards me: Quicken the motions of thy blessed Spirit in me, renew my good thoughts, and fix them wholly upon heaven and heavenly things; Lord Jesus make me joyful in them, and for ever truly thankful for them.

Make me willing to enjoy thee, and ready to abandon all things for thee: Lord, I now seek thee but I cannot find thee, I call upon thee, but thou answerest me not: O kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, for thy love is better than wine.

Lord let thy left hand support me, and thy right hand imbrace me, let it be outwardly, and inwardly sustained by thee; my weakness by thy power, my rebellion by thine obedience, my folly by thy wisdom, my pollution by thy sanctification, my faith by thy fruition, that I may be grieved for

thine

thine absence, delighted in thy presence, inamored with thy beauty, inriched with thy bounty, inflamed with thy love, adorned with thy graces, comforted with thy consolation, incompast with thy glory. Amen.

CHAP. XV.

Upon the consideration of Gods peculiar Providence to his Children.

Lord,

NOthing can befall me in this life, without thy wise, and over-ruling providence; not so much as one hair of me can fall without thy allowance, for even my very hairs are numbred; as a Sparrow cannot fall to the ground, so neither a hair from mine head without thy sacred leave: And if thy blessed Providence protecteth these inferior creatures, if it extend it self even unto excrements, how much more safely doest thou guard the bodies, how much more tenderly the souls of thine Elect? Yet, such is my stupidity by nature, that I seldom look beyond the second causes; I usually content my self with casuals and contingencies, and often judge that meerly accidental, which sweetly moves by thy commands, to thine appointment, and thy childrens good.

Thy Providence is eternal, thy Provision in time; thou, O Lord, art infinitely wise, and canst therefore provide infinitely well, the end thou ordainest to thy self, the means to thy creature; good and bad are under thy protection; the good for themselves, the bad for others; both for thy glory; the one thou willest

to

to be happy, the other thou permitteſt to be miſerable; neither of them can avoid their neceſſity of fate, and yet thou neither inclineſt the one, nor inforceſt the other, becauſe unto both in their original thou gaveſt perfect freedom of will, to chuſe the good, to leave the bad; to inherit life, or purchaſe death.

Bleſſed God, we are all debtors in our firſt Parents, thou mayeſt therefore moſt juſtly require that of us, which was lent us in them; They were able to pay, but not willing; we, their woful poſterity (as we are in nature) are neither able, nor willing; but by thy grace, Lord, we are only willing and not able; and thou haſt therefore ſent thine only Son, who was both freely willing, and fully able, to appeaſe thy Juſtice, to reconcile thy Mercy, to comfort us here, to crown us hereafter.

And now, Lord, having given us thy Son, how ſhalt thou not, together with him alſo, give us all things? and yet, I often ſee thee giving of good things to the bad, and bad to the good: there is nothing more frequent in this life, than the afflictions of thy children, nothing more common than the proſperity of the wicked, they receive their good things in this life. I ſhall enjoy mine in that to come, when I ſhall be comforted, and they tormented. Thou, O Lord, art righteous in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works? thou loadeſt them with thine outward bleſſings for their outward obedience; thou denieſt me theſe outward favours, for mine inward advantage; by the one they are left inexcuſable, by the other I am made more conformable; my patience exerciſed, my faith tried,

tried, my love examined, my humility proved; all these are special tokens of thy mercy towards me, for as grace increaseth here, so shall glory hereafter.

Lord, what can he fear that is assured of thy favour? that knoweth assuredly, that all these outward things shall work together for the best to his advantage: If *Joseph* be thrown into the Pit, it is to send him into *Ægypt*; if into Prison, to prefer him to *Pharaoh*, that so Corn may be sent into *Canaan*; if Satan be sent to tempt *Job* with afflictions, it is because *Job* shall overcome Satan by patience; if holy *David* become a sad spectacle of humane frailty by sinning, it is to make him a pattern of true piety in repenting; if the bodies of the Saints be grievously martyr'd in this life, it is to array them with glorious robes in that to come.

Lord, let this teach me joyfully to entertain the saddest of events, which either thy wisdom, mans unrighteousness, or Satans cruelty, can bring upon me; to be patient under them, and thankful for them; to ransack my soul, and search diligently there, for what sin thou sendest this sorrow, to bewail it, abhor it, forsake it, and earnestly implore thy pardon for it: When I am thus happily resolved, I shall then have that undaunted boldness, to say with holy *Job, Although thou killest me, yet will I trust in thee*; *with holy* David, *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear none evil, for thou Lord art with me*, and with the blessed Apostle, *that I know assuredly, that the sufferings of this life shall work for me a far greater and more exceeding weight of glory* in that to come.

To

To thee therefore, O thou blessed Guardian of my sinful soul, and wretched body, do I address my self for safety and protection.

I confess, O Lord, there is no one minute of my whole life can be safe without thy gracious providence, and yet so wretched have I been, that few or none of them have been devoted to thy service.

Lord, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all thy truth thou hast afforded me; even the very best of all my actions hath justly merited the very worst of all thy punishments, and yet thou daily loadest me with thy blessings, although I hourly sin against thee, by my great transgressions.

Forgive me my unmindfulness of these thy mercies, my great unthankfulness for all thy favours, and fix my sinful soul more willingly, more joyfully, more fervently, more constantly, in thy services.

Teach me to keep a catalogue of thy mercies, to let none pass without a thankful and devout acknowledgment; to set some days apart from the year, some hours from each day, to praise thee for them.

Forgive the pride of my prosperity, my carelessness of thee, my coldness unto thine, my crossness unto others, my cruelty to my self.

Lord, pardon my repinings in adversity, my distaste of thy power, my distrust of thy providence, my denial of thy wisdom, my refusal of thy love, my contempt of thy favour, my neglect of thy grace, my despair of thy goodness.

O give me such a blessed frame of heart, that I may chearfully and joyfully content my self, to

walk

walk in whatsoever paths thy blessed providence shall lead me to: O hold thou up my going in those paths, that my feet slip not; teach me to make a gracious and a sweet improvement of these outward crosses, a blessed and a wise advantage of thine inward graces: Lord lead me by thy counsel here, and afterwards receive me to thy glory. Amen.

CHAP. XVI.

Upon sinful Anger, and the great disturbance thereof.

Lord,

WHen I consider of thy patience, and long-suffering towards me, a miserable sinner, of the lowliness of thy Saints, and of the great humility and meekness of my Saviour in his sufferings, I much deplore the woful weakness of mine own infirmities, and more admire the richness of thy goodness, in admitting me to speak unto thee.

What pleasure, Lord, canst thou take in that service which is all sin? how canst thou delight in that which thou abhorrest? thou art a God of pure eyes, and canst not behold iniquity; if all my righteousness be in thy sight as filthy rags, and menstruous clothes, how full of ugliness and deformity, will my sins then appear before thee?

Ah Lord, thou hast often seen how easily, how suddenly, how wretchedly, I have been swallowed up of sinful passion; how I have violated that invaluable peace which thou hast given me, by revengeful thoughts, by despightful words, by disturbing actions: I know nothing

thing in my corrupt nature, but to know my self miserable; I see nothing in this misery, but terrour and confusion, affliction to my body, destruction to my soul; all occurrences of this life should have rather added to my growth of grace, than disturbance of nature: I have hitherto been grosly mistaken, in calling that a defect of my body, which is in truth an error in my soul: Nature was at first created pure, no disobedience was then in the passions, Man hath married it by his Fall: all the Streams that are now troubled, flow from this Fountain; this barren excuse therefore is so far from lessening sin, that it makes it bigger. I am now so much the more stained by committing actual sin, as I should have been more holy, and am not, since original.

Lord, let this teach me to do truly with my soul, to uncloath my self of all sinful excuses, that so sin may appear truly what it is, and may become out of measure sinful; that mine Anger may be holy, my Application of it happy, that nothing may disturb me but sin; that I may be a Lyon in thy Cause, a Lamb in mine own; that when I hate the sin, I may love the person; when I rebuke the offence, I may pray heartily for the offender; so shall I zealously enjoy thee my God, religiously embrace my neighbour, patiently possess mine own soul.

And now, Lord, as thou hast given me an heart to confess my sins of impatience before thee, so give me a sweet assurance in my Saviour, that by him I have assured pardon for them.

If thou Lord for my sinful Anger shalt inflict upon me thy severe wrath, and for my long con-

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tinuing in my sins, the long duration of thy punishments; yet let not thy severity exceed the measure of my Christian charity; though thou continuest my miseries, yet withdraw not thy mercies, O make me more and more humble unto thee my God, and more and more meek amongst thy children; conform me to that blessed pattern of true piety and patience; that as a sheep in thy hands (my blessed Shearer) so I may be dumb, and not open my mouth against thee.

Lord, banish from me all desires of revenge; let Patience have its perfect work, to quiet me here, and Crown me hereafter.

I confess my self to be a great and grievous sinner, and yet I am thy creature; my body is thine, and my soul is thine, both were joyned in thy creation, and both joyned in my devotion; both have sinned against thee, O let them both be humbled before thee, not to satisfie thy Justice, but to implore thy mercy; not to merit thy Grace, but to magnifie thy goodness.

Lord, make me truly sensible of the greatness of thy misery, that I may the more devoutly, the more sincerely sue to thee for mercy: Forgive the many violent eruptions of my sinful passions, give me a meek and humble spirit, that I may happily enjoy thy presence, and mine own Content. Lord grant that I may patiently and joyfully imbrace the wrongs and injuries of this life for thy sake, who hast been patient even to death for mine.

Let that be made easie unto me by thy grace; which by nature is impossible, that nothing may delight me, but thy love, nothing grieve me, but thy displeasure, nothing offend me, but thy dishonour. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Upon Mans inordinate love to the Creature.

WOe is me that I am constrained to live in *Meshech*, and to dwell in the Tents of *Cedar*; woe is me that I was conceived in sin, that I was born in sin, and that I have so long been captive to the power of sin; How vain am I, how wretched, to beguile my self of rest and quietness? O how unworthy to defile my Marriage vows, to prostitute my love to these unclean and false embraces, of a sinful world, to dig unto my self these broken Cisterns of impure and empty joys, and to forsake those living waters of eternal life! O woful caitif, if I well consider what I am; but far more woful, if I seriously consider what I should be.

Lord, when I was in my blood, thou saidst unto me, live; when I was cast out, and none eye pitied me, then thou hadst mercy on me; when I was naked, thou clothedst me; when I was wounded, thou healedst me; nay, more, Lord, thou didst uncloath thy self for me, and by thy wounds I am healed; when I was loathsom in mine own eyes, I was beautiful in thine, and when all this is not yet enough to manifest thy wonderful compassions towards me, thou feedest me at thine own Table, thou lodgest me in thine own Bosom, thou makest me partaker of thine own Inheritance.

Blessed God, what couldst thou have done more for me that thou hast not done? And yet for all this I forsake thee, I neglect thee, I a-

buse thee, I adulterate those many vows and promises I made unto thee. And now, Lord, when I am even ashamed to present my self before thee, when my false heart hath been so great a stranger to thy blessed bosom, that I am even afraid to kneel to thee for mercy; thou graciously forgivest me, thou bemoanest my sin, thou hidest my shame, thou makest love unto me, and (to the wonder of my soul) delightest still to set thy love upon me.

Thou, O my blessed Saviour, hast told me, that if I were of this world, it would love me, but now I am not of this World, that the World hateth me: Lord, what madness is this in me to love mine utter enemy? to delight in her bosom, which hunteth for my precious life? to forsake thee, the pleasant Lilly of the Vallies, the sweet Refreshmenes of Eternity, to weary out, and wound my soul amongst the Bryars of this barren Wilderness? Thou Lord, hast said unto me, Arise my Love, my fair one, and come away; thou invitest me from the showers and tempests of a stormy Winter, from the cares and troubles of a discontented life, to the sweet dews of thy graces, the gentle breathing of thy Spirit, the tender buds of thy love, the lovely blossoms of thy goodness, the pleasant fruit of thy promises, the joyful crop of thy performances: And notwithstanding all this I still cry, yet a little more sleep, yet a little more slumber, yet a little more folding of the hands together; yet a little more sin, yet a little more shame, yet a little more sorrow.

Ah, Lord, what is there in the creature, that thus

thus strangely bewitcheth me? or rather what is there not in it, that is not every minute ready to betray me, and despoil me of those precious ornaments of soul which thou hast given me; the cares and crosses of this life afflict me, the pleasures before me, the Prophets disturb me, pride puffeth me up, and even mine own heart deceiveth me, by calling good evil, and evil good; by making that sweet in the expectation, which is bitter in the fruition: Lord while I have sought the creature, I have lost my self, my body in distempers, my soul in distractions.

That precious Faith which is the ground of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, whose end is the salvation of my soul, which is thy gift who art the God of truth, is now drowned in a sea of error, and justly given up to believe dreams and delusions, and doctrines of Devils; to trust wholly in vanity, and to follow after lying.

That saving knowledge, by which I was formerly enlightned in thy sacred Truths, is now blinded with the foggy mists of sin and ignorance: This Lord, is my great aggravation, and just condemnation, that light is come into the world, and I have loved darkness better than light.

That glorious hope which maketh not ashamed, but expecteth an inheritance eternal in the heavens, which fadeth not away, is now become a vain and empty hope, delighted with sin, rewarded with shame.

Those blessed affections by which my happy soul was wont to walk in thy ways, and to

delight it self in thy commands, are now wearied out in ways of wickedness; and that heart which hath so often promised obedience unto thee, and thy Laws, hath now forsaken thee the living God, and hath made a covenant with Death and Hell.

Thus am I robbed and spoiled of all, and am become poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked, and miserable; my whole head is sick, and my whole heart is faint; I have sown in iniquity, and must reap in affliction; I am intoxicated with the wine of Errour, that stings me like a Serpent, and bites me like a Cockatrice, and yet, when I awake (such is the sadness of my present condition) I say, I will seek it yet still.

Lord, he that is once out of thy path, knoweth not the length of his journey, and may well fear to lose himself for ever.

And now, Lord, what is my hope? truly my hope is even in thee; thou seest my weakness, and acceptest my willingness: thou that knowest it impossible that the world should be overcome by me, biddest me be of good comfort, because thou (Lord) hast overcome the world for me; if I fight not against thee, though I am often foiled, yet I am more than conquerour in thee.

O let this teach me joyfully to rely upon thee, to make thee the height of my joy, the end of my desires, the only happy and eternal object of my sinful soul: Lord, I heartily desire thee, I thankfully embrace thee, and do for ever vow my soul and body to thee.

Suffer me not to wander from thy blessed presence,

sence, let me not longer dally nor dissemble with my soul; O let me not think that I then love thee, when I love but my self in thee; make me now at last to know those blessed things that belong to my peace, lest they be for ever hid from mine eyes.

Lord, by thy rich mercy I can now plainly see the vanity and emptiness of all these earthly objects, the folly and misery of those that rest in them, the rest and quietness of those that least rely upon them; in this transitory beauty of the Creature, I can now behold the ravishing perfections of the great Creator.

Lord, I now exceedingly desire to know thee, that I may for ever love thee, that I may be sick of love till I enjoy thee, that I may joyfully rest in thee, and be eternally united to thee.

For thou, Lord, art infinitely sweeter than the sweetness of thy Creatures, they are all but emptiness and vanity, but in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more.

O thou blessed Fountain of eternal goodness, forgive me mine offences, cover my sins, and fix my soul upon the sweetness of thy heavenly joys, and give constancy and steadiness of heart, to cleave unto thee, and for thy mercy sake remove all vain desires that may betray me from thee.

O thou blessed Saviour of my sinful soul, by whose perfect obedience, all my disobedience is forgiven me, who hast given thy self for me, and to me, give me also unfeigned repentance, that I may heartily bewail the sinfulness of my life past, that I may make a gracious improvement of

my life present, and faithfully perform the vows and promises which I make unto thee, for the short remainder of my life to come.

O blessed and eternal Comforter of all those sinful souls that put their trust in thee, give me a sweet and full assurance of thy love in Christ; withdraw my wretched heart from vanity, inflame it with an earnest and affectionate desire to thee; open mine eyes, that I may see some glimpse of thy celestial joys prepared for me; make me often to think of them, earnestly to long for them, and readily and chearfully to part with all these earthly pleasures to enjoy them.

Lord make me able to encounter and withstand the strong assaults of Satan, and this evil world; give me thy saving grace, and take from me what thou wilt; without thy blessed presence, all these outward joys are weariness, and emptiness; without thee, even life it self is bitterness unto me; without thy love I ask it not of thee, yea, I rather beg thee (Lord) to take it from me, that so I may be joyfully released from the bondage of a sinful body, that I may love thee with a pure and spotless soul, that all mine imperfections may be done away, that so I may securely dwell with thee, in perfect holiness, and endless happiness. Amen.

CHAP. XVIII.

Upon the sin of Uncleanness, with encouragements to avoid it.

COnsider, O my soul, in what a blessed relation thou now standest to thy God, thou hast lately grieved for thy sins, and God hath also

also graciously accepted of thy sorrow, and thou art now at peace and union with him; his holy Spirit is thy Comforter, his holy Providence thy Guide, his holy Angels thy Guardians, his holy Saints thine Assistants; the Creatures without thee are at league and union with thee, and thy Conscience within thee is a continual feast unto thee; while thus thou continuest, thy safety is inviolable, thy joy unutterable, thy peace unalterable.

Who can express the blessedness of this condition? how ravishing is this reviving presence of the gladding Spirit, by which thou art sustained sweetly here, by which thou shalt be joyfully refresht hereafter?

Wilt thou now lose all this (O my soul) for this false, this foul, this momentany pleasure? wilt thou lodge this beastly sin, where thou now lodgest thy Redeemer? Consider how vain it is, how bitter it will be; think how many sad thoughts, how many aking hearts, how many wounding sighs, this fall of thine will cost thee; what distempers of body, what disturbances of soul, what unquietness of sleep, what checks of Conscience, what inward sadness in thy greatest merriment, and (which is worst of all) what a fearful apprehension of Gods wrath in this life, and woful expectation of judgement, and suffering of extremity of pains in Hell for ever.

Let not the vain hope of Gods mercy flatter thee; for while he is merciful, he will be just, yea, his mercy shall provoke his justice; if his patience and long suffering do not lead thee into timely repentance, his wrath and fury

ſhall ſurely lead thee out to greater condemnation.

If cuſtom perſwade thee, let cuſtom alſo reclaim thee; if thy fleſh murmur, thy ſpirit will rejoyce: O how happy wilt thou find this oppoſition! how glorious this victory! even but one bleſſed thought of amendment, is of more value than an age of ſin.

Holy Saint *Auguſtin*, who was wont to nouriſh his laſcivious fleſh, and thought it then impoſſible to live without the luſtful kiſſes of his *Roman Dames*, when once he had but reliſhed the raviſhing embraces of eternity, brake forth into the ſweet and moſt divine expreſſions, *How truly ſweet is the loſs of this earthly ſweetneſs! thoſe tranſitory joys which I was formerly afraid to loſe, I now rejoyce to baniſh; it was thou, O Lord, who didſt thruſt them out; it is thou O Lord, who art entred in, who art ſweeter than all ſweetneſs*, &c.

Lord let this example move me to a bleſſed imitation of this bleſſed Saint, to take heed of holding conference with Satan, to labour to repel the very firſt motions to ſin; if I delight in his diſcourſe, I ſhall ſoon conſent to his counſel; if he feel me reſiſt, I ſhall find him give ground. Lord, let me remember what I fight for, and follow my advantage with courage and ſucceſs, that when my days of warfare ſhall determine, I may ſay with joy and comfort, with thy bleſſed Apoſtle, *I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finiſhed my courſe, from henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day, and not unto*

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me onely, but unto all those that love, and expect the day of his appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

Lord,

Thou hast often seen the weakness of thy sinful servant, how willingly, how wretchedly I have been yielding to the false allurements of my sinful flesh; how basely I have given ground, even upon the very first assault, without desire of resistance, without care of repentance.

I have hitherto been so far from sorrowing for this sin, that I have much delighted in it, and often grieved thee, my God, in framing of excuses for it.

Blessed God, how rich is that peace which I enjoy by thee, how glorious that hope which I possess in thee, how wonderful that mercy I obtain from thee? and yet, how carelesly, how coldly have I parted from thee? Lord forgive what is past, restrain what is present, prevent what is to come; O let me enjoy no sweetness but in thee, who art nearer to me than I can be to my self, who art sweeter to me than the sweetness of those earthly pleasures.

O give me such a blessed frame of heart, such Angel-like integrity of soul, that my thoughts may be chast, my desires holy, my words gracious, my actions good.

Give me a double portion of thy blessed spirit, that I may double my obedience to thy sweet commands, that I may tast the comforts of my heavenly joys, and utterly abhor the false allurements of this sinful world.

Let the sweet showers of thy distilling graces, allay these motions of concupiscence, extinguish these devouring flames of lust, that I may con-

stantly and happily oppose this darling sin to my last hour, and joyfully triumph with thee for ever. Amen.

CHAP. XIX.

Upon immoderate Mirth, and the sinful inconveniencies thereof.

Lord,

IF I were this day to dye; If thou shouldest now say unto me, give an account of thy Stewardship, for thou shalt be no longer Steward; if my Audit were at this instant to be given up, and all mine actions this present hour to be accounted for, how sadly should I look upon that lost time which hath been spent in sin? how many vain *Items* must needs appear to my deserved shame, and endless sorrow? So many minutes wasted in unclean and wanton cogitations; so many days and nights in frivolous and idle discourse; so many weeks, and months, and years, in vain and sinful actions: How full of horror and confusion would this Account appear, even to mine own eyes; With what face should I dare present it unto thine? What would I not now give to purchase but some small respite to redeem this woful waste, this vain expence of time? What serious vows and faithful promises should I now make of amendment? What constant hours would be now dedicated to thy service? my whole life would now seem too little to bewail my folly, to redeem my loss.

O what madness is it then, while I have days of mercy, to despise them, to abuse them,

to be utterly neglective of them? What is it, Lord, that I so eagerly pursue? Even the very heighth of all mine outward happiness, is but a short crackling of thorns, a sudden blaze, which may seem to warm me, but can never through-y heat me: Wo be to that soul for ever, that can find no refreshment but in this momentany fire; If thy Grace, Lord, cannot warm me, thy Glory will not comfort me.

There can be no true joy but in godly sorrow; *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, the heart of fools in the house of mirth,* Eccl. 7. 6. The luxurious Wanton may be carnally joyful, but the penitent Christian is cordially merry.

There is no better trial of this truth (Lord) than from thine own mouth, who wert a man of sorrows; thou, O Lord, hast told me, That I shall weep, but the world shall rejoyce; that I shall sorrow, but my sorrow shall be turned into joy, and my joy shall no man take from me, *John*, 16. 20.

Deceive not thy self therefore, (O my soul) for if thou walkest too far in this enticing path, thou art out of thy way to Heaven; and thou mayst go so far in it as to lose thy self, and by a customary freedom of thy Christian liberty, soon find so great an indisposition unto God, and goodness, that unless the blessed Shepherd of thy soul vouchsafe to find thee, by his saving grace, it is improbable, nay, it is impossible that thou shouldst ever return.

Canst thou be so senseless to believe that thou art Christs Disciple, when thou wilt not bear his Cross? Did ever any of his followers enjoy hea-

heaven without violence, without beating down their bodies, without cherishing their souls? without much weeping, fasting, praying, sighing, groaning for their sins? without being crucified unto the world, and the world unto them? without checking and controlling their unruly lusts? without utterly forsaking all this earthly trash, and joyfully accounting it as loss and dung to possess Christ?

Look upon the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins, Fathers of the Church, and all the blessed company of Saints, in all times, places, Ages of the World, and thou shalt find them all to use this World as if they used it not, quietly, sparingly, soberly; *Isaac* at his evening devotion in the solitary fields, *Elijah* at his private *Carmel*, the *Baptist* in the desart, St. *Paul* in his desires out of the body, and with Christ, holy *Simeon* in his Pillar, Saint *Jerome* in his Cave; all of them and innumerable more of God's Saints, were true *Benonists*, Sons of Sorrow and Affliction.

Lord, with how much fervour, and alacrity of soul, did these thy blessed ones pursue thy heavenly joys? what sharp combats had they to overcome themselves? And if such chosen and select Vessels as these, have had such great strivings, such powerful conflicts with their sinful bodies? what will become of me? that have obeyed sin in the lusts thereof, that can find no pleasure but in folly, no laughter but in madness.

Consider therefore, O my soul, whilst thou hast yet time, that there is no truer character of a graceless heart, than prophane mirth; thou

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art too ready to believe, that God is merciful, that all thy sins may be forgiven thee in a moment; that the good Thief was saved at the last hour, and that therefore thou mayst still go on in wickedness. God indeed is always ready to show mercy, but it is onely unto those that are ready to repent: And how knowest thou whether God will accept thee in that hour? Whether he may not, whether he will not, then withdraw his saving grace from that sinful soul, which hath so long withdrawn it self from his service: This is that which thy blessed Saviour telleth thee, *Not every one which crieth Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven*, Mat. 7. 21.

And lest perhaps that one example of the dying Penitent may flatter thee, consider of the time, the place, the manner of his strange conversion: *This was assuredly* (saith St. *Augustin*) *to manifest the power and Godhead of a dying Saviour, and that upon the rare confession of an Infidel, and that at such a time when all the world forsook him, and even his own Disciples either doubted, or denied his Godhead.*

Alas, how little comfort canst thou now reap from this example? how should it rather affright thee, to see but one soul amongst so many millions, to obtain mercy at the last hour, and that upon such weighty circumstances? on what a weak foundation dost thou build thy hopes of happiness? how easily will that devouring storm of thine accusing conscience ruin it? and then how great the fall will be, the fearful horror of thy lost estate will wofully express.

Lord,

Lord, let this teach me to redeem those precious hours which I have lost: O let each wanton thought, each idle word, be monitors to tell me how my Audit stands with heaven, I can speak nothing, I can do nothing, which I can recal; each circumstance of sin is charged in mine account, and must be reckoned for: how careful should this make me of the expense of that time that is recorded for eternity? Thou, O Lord, art holiness it self, thy Saints and Angels are holy, and thy Children must be holy; nothing but holiness can inherit heaven, no unclean pleasure, no impure joy shall enter there; How can I ever hope to be an inhabitant of that holy City, whose heavenly language I cannot speak?

And now, Lord, seeing these things are thus, by thine assisting grace, I seriously resolve to allow my self no pleasure in this life, but what is sanctified with moderation; because I clearly see these outward pleasures to be onely so far useful unto me, as by them I am made more serviceable unto thee: Moderate my honest repast, set an edge upon my soul, and make it more earnest, more active in devotion, when I take up pleasure as a trade, I become a Traytor to my Body, a Tyrant to my Soul.

Lord, I am now heartily in love with heaven, and grudge at that hours liberty in outward merriment, that maketh not the next more eager of mine inward comfort: There is no sweetness but in goodness, and there is no goodness in that mirth which is not subordinate to this sweetness: Christian liberty may be easily mistaken, and become licentious wickedness, there

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is often-times most danger in those things which seem most necessary, if not used with moderation.

And now Lord, having seriously considered what time is, and wherefore, I admire the folly, and lament the misery of all those whose onely aim is to mis-spend it: My days are few, and full of evil, O let my greatest care be to husband my time well; I have much business, and great, to dispatch, and I know not whether this days light may be my last; Mine eternity of joy or sorrow, hath its dependance on this short moment: If I think upon it seriously, I shall grudge to spend one minute vainly: Lord, there is no distinction of time with thee; one day with thee, is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; O let me seriously consider, that with me there is, that I must work while it is called to day, that mine hours are swift and short, that the night of death cometh, when I cannot work; that the end of all things cometh, when time shall be no more: By thy grace therefore I will piously devote the remnant of my life to holy duties, so shall mine age of sin be nothing in thy sight; and one day well spent (in thy remembrance) as a thousand years.

Blessed Lord,

Wilt thou accept of such a sinful creature as I am to appear before thee, to approach unto thee, to sue to thee for mercy? How bold am I to look up unto thee with these adultrous eyes, that have so long been gazing on these earthly joys? how much presuming on thy mercy, to implore thee with that tongue, that hath so much provo-

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ked thy displeasure? how impudent to offer that disloyal heart unto thee, that hath so fast been wedded to this sinful world?

Lord, when mine own wretchedneß had brought thy gracious visitation on me, when thy hand presſed me sore, when thine arrows stuck fast in me, and the venome of them drank up my spirits; when my heart was in heavineſs, and my soul in bitterneſs, when my life was drawing near unto the grave, when mine own conscience pleaded powerfully againſt me, and the terrors of a second death were ready to devour me; I then earneſtly implored thee for mercy, and thou freely forgaveſt me; I then begged my life of thee, that I might thankfully devote the remnant of my life unto thee.

Ah Lord, how wretchedly hath mine own heart deceived me; what serious vows, and faithful promiſes did I then make unto thee? and yet, how carleſly, how fooliſhly am I departed from thee? how vainly have I trifled out that precious time which thou haſt given me? how juſtly mayſt thou now deprive me of this wretched life, by which I have so much diſhonoured thee?

And now, Lord, when I have even wearied out my ſelf in wickedneß, when my ſoul is overcharged with ſin, and my heart with ſorrow; when the vanity of this life is ready to forſake me, and there is nothing left but miſery and ſhame to ſeize upon me; I have not yet reſolved ſeriouſly to come unto thee.

Lord, leave me not unto the weakneß of mine own infirmities, expoſe me not unto the raging billows of theſe ſtrong temptations, ſuffer me not

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to ſink into this depth of ſin, to be deſtroyed by this dreadful ſtorm of Satan, and mine one accuſing conſcience; rebuke theſe winds and waves, and cauſe a bleſſed calm within me; reach out thy hand of mercy, and ſupport me; ſtrengthen my drooping ſoul, that I may joyfully and faithfully lay hold upon thee: give me a fixed heart, that I may ſeriouſly return unto thee, and may this hour be graciouſly accepted of thee.

Lord wean me from the falſe embraces of this evil world, turn all theſe ſinful joys to bitterneſs unto me, make me to ſee their foulneſs and deformity, their emptineſs and vanity, their ſhortneſs and uncertainty, their falſhood and flattery, their wearineſs and miſery.

O let my heart be filled, let my ſoul be raviſhed with thoſe tranſcendent joys of thine which are for ever, give me a joyful ſoul to reſt ſecurely in them, a ready heart devoutly thankful for them.

Lord, moderate my deſires to outward injoyments; let me reliſh no ſweetneſs, but in thy love, no goodneſs but in thy grace, no comfort but in the full aſſurance of thy glory.

Forgive thoſe wretched hours which have been ſtoln from thy ſervice: O Lord, my God, I heartily bewail them, and willingly reſolve to ſpend my days in ſorrow for them.

Make me more watchful over my corrupt heart, more carefull of my precious time, more ſerious in the weighty work of my ſalvation; more ſorrowful for ſin, more mindful of the hour of death and day of judgment: That ſo I may affect the pleaſures of this life ſoberly, enjoy them ſparingly, and leave them chearfully. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Upon the great danger of deferring the hour of repentance.

COnsider, O my soul, of the great danger of delaying thy repentance; of judging that so easie, which will prove so difficult; of thinking that almost finisht, which is scarce yet begun; Believest thou it will suffice thee to have some transitory thoughts of thine amendment, to have perhaps some pinching sighs, some stings of conscience, some shews of sorrow for thy sins; to hang down thy head like a bulrush for a day, and yet afterwards to return with the dog to thy filthy vomit, and with the sow to the wallowing in the nasty mire of sin: While thou continuest in this course, thy hopes of amendment are extream doubtful, of reconciliation dangerous, of repentance desperate.

If ever thou hopest to inherit heaven, let not Satan thus delude thee; look well into thine evil and corrupt heart, and thou shalt there find, that this is not the cure, but the disease of sin; that thou grievest not for thine offence, but for thy punishment; that thou mayst yet go much farther in this supposed path of thy repentance, and still be far short of that sincerity of heart which God requireth of thee, and yet have no part nor fellowship in Christ: Thou mayst with *Saul* express thy sorrow with thy tears; with those Believers in the Gospel, receive the word with joy; with *Demas*, shew thine inward grace by thine outward obedience, and in some sort be made partaker of the Holy

Holy Ghoſt, and have a taſte of the good things of the world to come, and yet for all this, come far ſhort of this unfeigned work of true repentance. Alaſs, what can it profit thee to bewail that ſin which thou wilt not forgo? what reward canſt thou expect for that obedience which ſo ſoon fainteth? what comfort in that joy which is but temporary.

Remember how great a work thou haſt in hand, how many millions of loſt ſouls complain eternally in hell of this neglect; O look into the foulneſs of thy ſin, and then into the trueneſs of thy ſorrow: If thou art Gods child, thou wilt be grieved for offending ſo good a Father; thou wilt abhor that ſin that hath ſo much provoked his diſpleaſure, thou wilt moſt ſolemnly proteſt againſt it, and ſeriouſly reſolve for ever to avoid it; thy ſin will be ever before thee, to humble thee here, to exalt thee hereafter.

Thy degrees of ſin will have thy degrees of ſorrow; thy meaſure of pollution will require thy meaſure of ſanctification: As thou haſt given up thy members to be ſervants of ſin, ſo thou muſt now yield them up to be weapons of righteouſneſs; as thou haſt been drowned in pleaſure, ſo thou muſt be drencht in tears; yea thoſe tears will be thy daily food, to nourish thee in grace, to enrich thee in glory.

O how truly bleſſed is that ſoul, which hath unfeignedly reſolved on this good, this great, this neceſſary work? that can chearfully and joyfully expreſs it ſelf with holy *David*, and ſay, *Lord, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long, I have roared out for very anguiſh and unquietneſs of heart.* If thou haſt *David's*

vid's sorrow (O my soul) thou shalt assuredly have *David's* joy, thou shalt say with him also, *Lord, I am thy child, and the son of thine handmaid, thou hast broken my bonds insunder*, Psal. 116. 16. Satan may now tempt thee, and through thy frailty and infirmity prevail against thee; but to become a customer to evil, the powers of hell cannot entice thee; a thousand worlds are not now of that value with thee, as the joyful remembrance of thy passed dangers, thy present comfort, thy future safety.

Thou hast now seen (O my soul) how absolutely necessary this great work is; think now how happy will be the performance, how full of danger the delay: the longer thou continuest in sin, the more remote thou art from grace; What extream folly is this in thee, to deprive thy self of that friend of whom thou hadst most need? If thou findst thy self so backward to this holy duty now, how averse wilt thou be hereafter, when sin is more deeply rooted in thee, the devil in more firm possession of thee, and God himself removed further off from thee?

From whence now are these false hopes, these vain promises of future happiness? how darest thou refuse these gracious offers of eternity? how full of doubtfulness and extream hazard is this false assurance of that holy Spirit, which thou hast so often grieved? be not deceived, God is not mocked; look what a man soweth, even that shall he reap; he that soweth in the flesh, shall reap corruption; he that soweth in the spirit, life everlasting: If thou wilt not hear Gods call in this life, he will not hear thine in

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that to come; if thou wilt not mourn for thy sins here, thou shalt howl for them for ever. *And who shall then have pity upon thee? or who shall be sorry for thee? or who shall pray for thy peace? thou hast abandoned me* (saith God) *thou hast gone from me, and now will I stretch out my hand against thee, to destroy thee.* Jer. 15. 5, 6.

Lord, let this teach me to deal truly with my self, to search narrowly for sin, timely for sorrow, and speedily for pardon. *Seek the Lord, O my soul, while he may be found, for in the great water-floods* (of his eternal wrath) *thou shalt not come nigh him.*

Lord,

I have sinned, and I desire to repent; I have lain long festering in the grave of sin, and cannot be now raised without a miracle.

I have sinned in delight, in consent, in action, in custom, in long continuance of custom, without remorse of conscience, without thought of repentance: I am grown old and impudent in sin, and am no more worthy to be called thy child.

Lord, I am become loathsom to my self, how much more odious unto thee, who art a God of pure eyes, and canst behold none iniquity.

I have sinned against thee, I cannot repent but by thee, my transgression is active, my obedience passive, I can no more arise from sin than death, even this desire of sorrow is from thee; the repair of my corruption in the work of thy creation, when thou hast raised me by thy grace, thou supportest me by thy goodness, thou leadest me by thy providence, thou drawest me by thy patience, thou compellest me by thy power.

Such is my weakness, such is my feebleness by

nature,

nature, that I cannot rise without thee, that I cannot stand without thee, when I am raised by thee; such is my strength, such is my ability by grace, that I am able to go with thee, that I am joyful to run after thee.

Lord, quicken and revive me from the death of sin, and groan of misery, sustain my wounded conscience, with the sweetness of thy saving promises; let thy patience and long-suffering lead me into repentance, thy holy Spirit unto perfect holiness, and endless happiness.

Lord Jesus draw me, and I shall joyfully run after thee; my body in obedience to my soul, my soul and body in obedience to thy blessed will, more zealously, more willingly, more constantly to my lives end. Amen.

CHAP. XXI.

Upon Servile fear, and the danger thereof.

NO child can fear his Father as he ought, that is not jealous of his Fathers honour, that is not feelingly affected with his injuries, and zealously devoted to perpetuate his praise; and it is as equally impossible that this Father can affect that Son, whose obedience is rather enforced by power, then invited by affection.

If this be so in nature, it is much more so in Grace; for thou, O Lord, art now a double father to me, thou art my Father by creation, and my Father by redemption: Lord, as thou hast doubled thy goodness towards me, I should have doubled my return of thankfulness towards thee; thy love to me is absolute, no breach can dissolve it, no time determine it; thy love to me was from the beginning, and whom thou

thou loveſt to the end: My love to thee is fickle, falſe, and full of imperfections; and if my filial fear, even in my beſt performances, be full of ſpots and blemiſhes in thy ſight, how moſt deformed ſhall I appear, when I ſerve thee with an irreligious, and ungodly fear? when I do thy will repiningly, and coldly, not for love of thy mercy, but for fear of thy juſtice; when I am knowingly and willingly, conſenting to thy great diſhonour; when I am ſo zealous in the worlds cauſe, yea, too too often, in the devils cauſe, and ſo benummed in thine; when ſorrows diſmay me, and ſins delight me.

Ah Lord! how far am I from what I ought to be? If I go on in this path, I periſh everlaſtingly; while I continue in this courſe of diſobedience, I hang over hell five by the ſlender twig of an uncertain life, and if that once break, my loſs is irrecoverable: Thou Lord haſt ſaid it, (and thy word is truth) *He which denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven:* Lord, let this teach me to delight in thy ſervice, to be jealous of thine honor, to thirſt for thy favour, to tremble at thy frown, to ſubmit to thy rod, to think nothing too dear to part withal, to purchaſe thy grace to promote thy glory. Thou, O Lord, loveſt not a cowardly Chriſtian; If I prefer any thing to thy love, I am moſt unworthy of it; that friendſhip is too dearly bought, which cannot be enjoyed without the loſs of thy favour.

If my Brother offend me, I will labour to reſtore him with the ſpirit of meekneſs, leſt whilſt I ſtudy to rebuke another, I become guilty of my ſelf: No ſin ſhall paſs me without

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some shew of distast, without some feeling of my Makers injury, and my Brothers misery; If I be not moved with compassion, for anothers sin, I shall never be moved with contrition for mine own; such comfort as I can willingly afford another, I may well hope shall be graciously conferred on my self.

In my reproof of sin, I will observe these holy cautions, lest while I endeavour to become serviceable unto thee, I prove injurious unto my neighbour: Private sins shall not have publick reprehensions; neither shall publick sins be nndecently reproved by me a private person; Piety must not confound Charity, nor Religion Policy. Lord, I may easily transgress, even in my best intentions; how grievously have I then failed in my rebellious actions? when I have not feared thee with that sincerity of heart which becometh thy Child; when I have not loved thee for that beauty, for that richness, for that goodness which thou art, but for those outward blessings which I enjoy from thee; when I serve thee for base and by-respects; such, and so unbeseeming my profession, so far below that soul which thou hast given me, that thou mayst justly now withhold thy blessings from me; when I have hitherto sought but my self in thee, when my thoughts have been carnal, my words hypocritical, my service deceitful.

To thy glory (Lord) and mine own deserved shame, I willingly confess, that I have not only sinned through the frailty of my nature, but I have sinned also with an high hand; sin hath not only surprised me, at unawares, but I have obeyed it in the lusts thereof, with willingness,

with

with greedineſs, with joyfulneſs; I have not only corrupted mine own ways before thee, by mine own ſins, but I have alſo fooliſhly contracted others faults, by hearing and ſeeing thee my God diſhonoured in vain and ſinful diſcourſe, in more vain and ſinful exceſs, without ſhew of diſlike, without thought of reproof, yea, Lord, I have added unto others ſins by mine example, while I have feared to reprove that which I have known to be diſtaſteful unto thee, while I have ſeemed to love that which hath been hateful to mine own ſoul: With thoſe time pleaſing Rulers in the Goſpel, I have believed in thee, but becauſe of the Phariſes (becauſe of outward reſpects) I have feared to confeſs thee; and have loved the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God.

But thou, Lord, who art infinitely good, and ever ready to forgive, whoſe wiſe and ever ruling providence is only able to produce the greateſt good out of the greateſt evil, Pardon and paſs by my many, and my weak compliances of ſinful nature; ſupply my defects; accept my deſires, incourage my endeavours: let thy power be magnified in my weakneſs, thy love in my wilfulneſs, thy grace in my ſinfulneſs.

Suffer me not (O Lord) to run from thee, by a baſe and ſervile fear of thy Juſtice, O let me rather run into the boſom of thy love by a filial fear, in ſweet and ſafe aſſurance of thy mercy.

Lord, make me to ſee the fearfulneſs and ugliness of ſin, by the bright rayes of thy celeſti-

al beauty: O let me patiently, and joyfully, and thankfully, endure thy sweet chastisements for it, and speedily, and constantly withdraw my longings from it.

Give me an yearning and relenting Soul, for grieving thy good Spirit: Give me (O Lord) that chast and blessed Fear belonging only to thy Children, that I may not fear thee to tremble at thee, but to love thee, to honour thee, to delight in thee, to enjoy thee.

Lord, make me jealous of every deed, of every word, of every thought that may displease thee, and truly penitent for all those sins by which I have so much dishonoured thee: Indue me with a loyal heart to love thee truly as I ought; strengthen this love with holy confidence, and happy perseverance, that may for ever banish this unholy fear; that so my joyful soul may live above the reach of humane misery; that I may be capable of no fear, but of offending thee; and that I may not onely fear thee my self, but be jealous also of thy fear in others.

Lord, let nothing in this life withdraw me from a zealous and a constant love to thy service, from a faithful and devout endeavour to promote thy glory, that so I may be ever found truly obedient unto thee, my God, religiously acquainted with the affairs of this life, piously affected to the good of mine own soul. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Upon the great Neglect of reckoning daily with our Consciences, and the Benefits lost thereby.

CONsider, O my soul, how venomous the nature of sin is; if thou canst afford to sleep in small sins, thou wilt not stick to welcome greater. Sin is of an incroaching nature; if thou suffer it to sleep in thy bosom, it will expect to dwell there. Little sins are harbingers to bigger ones; if thou lodgest these, those will challenge entertainment. Let each evening therefore take a strict account of that days Action, and where thou findest thy self failing, pray heartily for Pardon.

In thine entrance upon this holy course, thou wilt surely find three potent Oppositions. Satan will tell thee, That God requireth no such strictness at thy hands. The World will tell thee, Thou hast this or that imployment to consider of. Thine one Corruption will perswade thee, That nature will abhor this discontented course, that thy Spirits will be too much dulled, and thy Life will prove uncomfortable.

Alas my soul! These are delusions to betray thee to a greater mischief. As there are degrees of Sanctification, so there are of Pollution; no man becometh evil in an instant: from hence it is, That sometimes the soul can start even at the very thought of that sin, which by degrees, it can digest without disturbance. If holy *David* had accounted with his Conscience, after his lustful looks on *Bathsheba*, doubtless those fear-

ful ſins of his had never been committed. O let not any vain pretences deter thee from this task, but the bleſſed benefits allure thee; if the entrance be harſh, the progreſs will be ſafe, the continuance ſweet, the end happy.

By this inquiry, thou ſhalt ſee thy ſins (thoſe great diſturbers of thy peace,) arraigned, convicted, condemned, and by the mercy of thy Saviour daily dying in thee; Satan repulſed, the gifts and graces of Gods holy Spirit ſtrengthened, thy mourning comforted, thine infirmities ſuſtained, thy conſcience quieted, thy rejoycings exalted, the holy Angels delighted, and thy heavenly Father well pleaſed. O how truly bleſſed are theſe enjoyments! what ſoul can be now ſad in this inquiry?

Lord, I now ſolemnly reſolve upon this ſafe, this ſweet, this bleſſed task; I willingly abandon all excuſes that may hinder me, and joyfully embrace thoſe happy duties which invite me nearer to thy heavenly preſence; thy yoak is eaſie, and thy burthen light, when thy grace hath redeemed me from the bondage of ſin, and reſtored me into the glorious liberty of thy children, I ſhall then find (to my ſouls comfort) that thy ſervice is perfect freedom, from ſin, from ſhame, from death, from hell; from all miſeries here, from all torments hereafter.

Be warie therefore, O my ſoul, and careful to remove all letts that may diſable thee: but thoſe eſpecially that turn me from a Chriſtian to a Beaſt. Satan hath many ways to couzen me; when he cannot beguile my judgment, he will betray mine affections, and lead me by a ſeeming good, in friendly ſociety, to a real

evil

evil in excess; and so when he cannot corrupt my intentions, he will undoubtedly divert mine actions, as well knowing it is impossible for him to be devout, who is not temperate.

Lord, by how much Satan is more powerful and malicious, by so much make me more wise and circumspect, that my intentions may be good, my words gracious, my actions vertuous, my life holy, my death happy.

Blessed God,

How large a portion of my little time have I bestowed on sin? how eager have I been of it? how negligent in asking pardon for it?

Lord pardon my unmindfulness of holy duties, make me more watchful for the time to come, that I may constantly resolve upon amendment of my evil ways, and willingly endure thy fatherly afflictions for them.

Forgive those sinful hours that have unfitted me for thy service, suffer me not, O Lord, to wander in the ways of wickedness, and when at any time the frailty of my wretched flesh shall tempt me to exceed those blessed bounds which thou hast set me, O let thy saving grace restrain me; let not this simple freedom captivate my precious soul, to thy dishonour, and mine own deserved shame; but let thy gladding Spirit be my joyful comfort, to refresh me in life, and protect me in death.

Make me more zealous, more intent upon the ways of godliness; Lord suffer not my pious resolutions to abate with any outward obstacles; let me not lean upon these broken reeds, but rest on thee the rock of my defence and safety.

Make me content to leave these earthly vani-

ties for thy sake, who were willing to forgoe thy heavenly Throne for mine; though the frailty of my nature hath too often led me into the bondage of sin, yet let the freedom of thy grace now guide me into the footsteps of sorrow, that this blessed sorrow may be turned into joy, and that this joy the world may not take from me.

Lord open mine eyes, that I may see the blessedness of goodness, the perfect freedom of thy service, the glorious liberty of thy children; so shall I willingly submit to thy commands, and joyfully partake of thy rewards.

Blessed God, with humbleness of soul, I offer up my self unto thee; Lord Jesus accept of me, and so assist me with thy grace, that I may wholly dedicate my self to thy glory. Amen.

CHAP. XXIII.

Upon Unchristian like dulness in affliction.

Lord,

I Cannot live without crosses, unless I can live without sin; when they come therefore I will bid them welcome for thy sake, from whom they are sent; not one of them can afflict me without thy leave, who hast directed their course, limited their power; let me not repine at that which I have justly deserved; let me rather rejoyce, that thou vouchsafest me this favour; if I were not thy child, I should not be under thy rod; if thou Lord didst not love me, thou wouldst not scourge me; no outward thing can so well assure me of thy favour, as the fellowship of thy sufferings; for if I suffer with thee, I shall assuredly be glorified together with thee.

Holy

Holy *David* was in trouble, and it was good for him: O let not that which was good for him, be evil for me. Lord, if thy Physick be bitter, yet it is wholsome; if it make me heart-sick now; it will make me healthful hereafter; if I disturb it not by mine impatience, it will work in me the quiet, and the happy fruits of true repentance, and amendment of mine evil ways; it will remember me that I am a Stranger, and a Pilgrim here, that there is nothing in this life but wearinesse, and sorrow, it will drive me from the penury of Sin, and tyranny of Satan, to the riches of grace, and liberty of goodness; it will encourage me to walk worthy of the richnesse of my calling in Christ Jesus; it will make me willing to go home to thee my heavenly Father, where I shall feel no more pain, find no more sorrow, suffer no more affliction, where thou Lord wilt wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes, all Grief from my Heart.

Thou (O Lord) alone knowest my disease, and canst best temper my portion; each degree must be answered, so much sinful pleasure as I enjoy, so much sorrow must I drink; (and woe be unto me for ever, if I drink it not) if I taste not of this cup here, I shall drink of the very dregs in Hell: Thou, O Lord, who hast freely forgiven me my sins, hast not fully remitted my punishments; thou who didst undergoe the misery of life, and the bitternesse of death for me, hast neither bought of the one, nor taken off the other from me; by thy sufferings, I am fully and for ever freed from the guilt and torments of sin; by mine own corruptions I am liable unto the act of sin, and so even unto death also as a tempo-

poral punishment for sin: Thou camest not, O Lord, wholly to abolish sin in me, but to become righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption unto me; not to abate my sorrows, but to uphold my sufferings, that I being thereby made conformable unto thee in grace, may hereafter be partaker with thee of thy heavenly glory.

How fearful ought this to make me to commit sin? how careful to avoid occasions of allurements to it? how thankful, how joyful, to receive Gods fatherly chastisements for it? I may here see, and joyfully admire the wisdom, justice, goodness, mercy, of my heavenly Father; his justice in punishing sin; his wisdom, in the proportion and end of this punishment? his goodness, by sustaining me under it, by redeeming me from it; his mercy, by making it to work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Lord, he that can droop under thy Cross, shall never follow thee to thy Crown; when I once find the lightness of this load, by the strength of thy supporting grace, I shall then feel to my souls exceeding comfort, that one sin of more weight than an age of sorrow.

And now Lord, I am joyfully prepared for the worst of afflictions, which either sin or Satan, life or death, can bring upon me; scourge me, launce me, bruise me, break me, do what thou wilt with me here, so thou spare me for ever; Lord, although thou killest me, yet will I trust in thee, for I know assuredly, that all these outward things shall work together for the best for me; and that my present sufferings thou hast

sent

ſent in mercy to me, to humble me for ſin, to preſerve me from ſhame; I kiſs them, I embrace them, and am ſincerely thankful for them. Lord, let me clearly ſee for what ſin thou haſt inflicted this puniſhment, that I may bewail it, abhor it, forſake it, implore thy pardon for it; when I am thus armed, I ſhall be able to encounter my fierceſt affliction; if I am found naked, the weakeſt will foyl me.

To thee, O Lord, whoſe wiſe and over-ruling hand diſpoſeth all occurrences of life, and ſweetly guides them to the good of thy children, do I addreſs my ſinful ſoul, for mercy and protection.

Lord open mine eyes, that I may ſee and believe the conſtancy of thy love, in the mutability of mine outward condition.

Give me a patient and a willing heart to welcome all the changes of this preſent life, to be humble under them, to rejoyce in them, and be thankful for them.

Forgive the pride of heart, and prodigality of hand, attending on my proſperous eſtate; my great repinings, and ungodly paſſions, incident to my declining happineſs, and increaſing miſery.

As thou haſt weaned me from the pleaſures of this life, by the rod of thine afflictions; ſo wean me alſo from the ſins of this life, by the ſtaff of thy conſolations; that ſo my heart may be wholly taken off from all earthly enjoyments; that I may become even as a weaned child, to forgo willingly what thou denyeſt me, to receive quietly what thou provideſt for me.

What I want of theſe outward bleſſings, ſupply unto me by thine inward comforts, which are infinitely better for me, and ſhall be therefore ever

dearer to me. Lord furnish me with graces suitable to all events, and able to encourage me in all afflictions.

Lord sanctifie this present sorrow to my sinful soul; so sweeten it by thy grace, that it may bring forth in me the quiet, and the happy fruits of righteousnes: Make it a sure pledge of thy fatherly affections towards me; let it daily and hourly draw me nearer to thy presence; let it wean me from the miseries of sin, and at last bring me to the sweet fruition of eternity. Amen.

CHAP. XXIV.

Upon Unchearfulnes in Christianity, with incouragements to avoid it.

AH Lord, from whence is my unchearfulnes, my dulnes in my Christian calling? how much below that glorious hope which thou hast given me? When I consider of the richnes of thy love in Christ, I find thee to be all in all unto me, and may well wonder at mine own unthankfulness, and ignorance, that is still doting on this worlds nothing and uncertainty. Thou (O Lord) art truly and eternally good, and therefore able to derive Eternity of happiness. Before I was created, I was thine, and when I was not mine own, thou becamest mine; thou (O my Saviour) who hast given me thy self, canst deny me nothing: What is too good, too great, too glorious for that soul which thou hast redeemed at so dear a rate, as the price of thine own blood, and espoused to thine own bosom? Thy creatures are at peace

with

with me, thy holy Angels attend me, guard me, fight for me, rejoyce at my converſion; thy Saints triumphant pray for me, the Devils fly from me, and thou, O Lord, by thine almighty power and gracious providence, art ever with me; thou careſt for me from the cradle to the tomb; *Thou art about my bed, and about my paths, and ſpyeſt out all my ways*; Yea, *Thy mercy embraceth me on every ſide*; when I ſleep I am ſafe, when I awake joyful; in proſperity I have thy rod to afflict me, in adverſity thy ſtaffe to comfort me; Lord, while I am in thy favour, I can look no way but to happineſs, if I walk not anſwerable to it, I may well fear to be deprived of it.

And doubtleſs (O my ſoul) thoſe eyes which look ſo graciouſly upon thee in this life, will behold thee with a more earneſt, with a more endeared love in that to come, theſe tranſitory glances are but the faithful pledges of thoſe future embraces. Thoſe arms of mercy which now ſupport thee in thine often failings, ſhall then encompaſs thee with glory; thoſe bleſſed hands which now chaſtiſe thee for thy rebellions, will then wipe away all tears from thine eyes; and that relenting heart, which ſometimes is moſt unwillingly withdrawn from thee for thy Apoſtaſie, will then unite it ſelf to thine for ever.

Lord, who can be a Chriſtian and be ſad? who can believe all this, and not triumph in joyful exaltation? and not inſult over the ſorrows of this life? and not contemn the joys of this bewitching world? and not reſiſt theſe cloudy diſcontented thoughts, theſe cloſe aſ-

faults,

faults of Satan's never-resting malice? Millions of Worlds, Miriads of Angels, cannot restore that cursed Spirit to this happiness which thou now enjoyest, and yet so slightly regardest.

O let this teach thee to abhor his soul temptations, to consider of thy worth in Christ, and to raise thy self above the reach of earthly misery; to love thy God faithfully, to serve him cheerfully, to persevere joyfully, to be patient in tribulation, to rejoice in hope, to pray continually, to thirst after the sweetness of his grace, and earnestly to long for the consummation of his glory.

Blessed God,

How unworthy am I to be called thy servant, who have so long been subject to the worlds commands? how undeserving of thy glorious liberty of thy Sons; who have so willingly been fetter'd by mine own corruptions? how uncapable of thy heavenly comforts, that can rejoice in nothing but these earthly vanities.

Lord open mine eyes, that I may see the richness of the price of my high calling in Christ Jesus, and endeavour to walk worthy of it; that I may earnestly desire thee, joyfully embrace thee, and constantly and chearfully devote my service to thee.

Forgive my drowsiness, my dulness, my backwardness to holy duties; awake my sinful soul from sensuallity, and raise it to the blessed thoughts of sweet eternity.

Compassionate my weakness, accept my willingness, forgive my sinfulness, quicken my dulness, correct my untowardness: Lord bring me to such a blessed frame of heart, that I may willingly

forego

forego the sins and miseries of this life, and frequently delight my self with contemplations of thy joyes in that to come.

CHAP. XXV.

Upon Man's sinful frailty in the hour of Temptation, with motives to make resistance.

I Am now in the list with Satan, and this hour to fight the Lords battel: God seeth me, and his holy Angels see me, I have long professed my self to be Christ's souldier, and he hath now brought me to the field to prove me, now is the tryal of my Courage, of my Christianity; If I overcome, I shall rejoyce on earth, triumph in heaven.

If that evil one were as powerful as malicious, I had just cause to fear him; but now my comfort and assurance is, That he cannot hurt me, but by me: He now strongly labours to encline my will (and woe were me, if he might compel it,) his subtle suggestions, his unclean solicitations, his sulminated motions may be the father begetting, but mine own corrupt heart is the mother conceiving; there can be no danger from abroad, if there be no treason at home.

Look well into thy self therefore O my soul, ascend the Watch-tower of thine understanding, and see that there lurk therein no seeming shews, no specious pretences, no gross lies, no false proposals to betray thee; if thy head be surprized, thy heart cannot long hold out.

Examine thine affections, try them by the blessed rule of divine precepts, if they be not sharply corrected, they will soon be corrupted; en-

endeavours to reſiſt the very firſt motions to ſin; for if Satan can beguile thine affections, he will undoubtedly command thine actions.

Quicken thy memory by the momentany pleaſure of ſin, by the heavy judgments threatned againſt it, by the ſad conſequences of it, by the eternity of torments after it: Think how often thou haſt been already foiled: how many ſerious vows and faithful promiſes thou haſt already made to God of thine amendment; how careleſly thou haſt diſpenſed with them all, and how preſumptuouſly perſiſted in thy follies. O think how gracious thy God hath been unto thee in forbearing, how wonderful his mercy is in pardoning, how juſtly he might now deſtroy thee, even in the very act of ſinning.

Lord, if none of all this will yet ſcare me from ſinning againſt thee, nor allure me to repenting, that I may draw nearer home unto thee: O let me yet conſider, who it is that leadeth me to fight, and wherefore I have engaged. Thou, O my bleſſed Saviour, art my Captain, and Heaven is my Countrey; Shall I now loſe thoſe rivers of eternal pleaſure, for this ſhort, this falſe, this momentany joy? ſhall I run from thee who art the Prince of Peace, and who haſt ſpilt thy precious blood for me, unto that cruel enemy of mankind, who hath drawn ſo much blood from me? Shall I forſake thee who haſt laid down thy life for me, and inſlave my ſelf to him, who every minute ſeeketh to devour me? Shall I diſhonour thee my God, grieve thine holy Angels, ſhame my profeſſion, wound mine own conſcience, terrifie mine own ſoul, ſeek mine own ruin? If I conſent to this temptation,

that

that God whom I dishonour will abhor me, those blessed Angels whom I grieve will forsake me, those cursed Spirits whom I obey will deride me, that conscience which I now wound will accuse me, that glorious Gospel which I shame will condemn me, and that ruin which I now seek will for ever seize upon me.

Let this move thee (O my Soul) as thou expectest happiness, to take up a blessed resolution of resistance: If the assault dismay thee, let the conquest encourage thee; if the beginning be sharp, the close will be sweet; if nature be dejected, grace will be strengthened; and as grace increaseth here, so shall glory hereafter.

Consider last of all what Saint *James* saith, and fix in thy thoughts as chief of all, *blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he will receive the Crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*, Jam. 1. 12. Thrice happy is that soul which is faithful in God's service, although it may often faint, it shall never fail; it may sometimes be foiled, but shall never be overcome; it shall never fall totally, it can never fall finally; for thou, Lord, upholdest it, and in thy love it is sure of safety here, of triumph hereafter.

Blessed God,

With grief of heart I willingly confess, that I have shamefully dishonoured thy great and glorious name, by mine often failings, by my many faintings, and more wretched yieldings, to the shame of my profession, the grief of thy good Spirit, and the terrour of my frail condition.

Lord, how wretched is my soul without thee? and

and yet how easily, how willingly am I inticed from thee? even at this instant I am ready to forsake thee, and may most justly fear to be forsaken of thee.

The world alloureth me, the flesh besotteth me, the devil beguileth me, and mine own false heart deceiveth me, and is now ready to rebel against me: O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me? Lord Jesus assist me, and let thy Saving-grace be now and evermore sufficient for me.

Lord rebuke these evil thoughts, believe my misery, support my weakness, strengthen my willingness, give me an undaunted courage in thy service, an unfeigned sorrow for my former failings, and constancy of heart against present suggestions, and future temptations, that I may find no sweetness but in thy love, no pleasure but in thy service, no profit but in thy rewards. Amen.

CHAP. XXVI.

Upon the Infirmities of the Saints.

Lord,

With grief of heart I confess, that I find a law in my members, rebelling against the Law of my mind, and leading me captive to the Law of sin, so that those things which I would do I cannot, and I daily and hourly do those things which I would not; yet my comfort is, that I make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof: By the weakness of mine own corruptions, I often fall into sin, but by the blessed Assistance of thy grace

grace I abhor to lie there; ſin oftentimes ſurpriſeth me, but by thy rich mercy hath never yet reigned over me; It hath often deceived me, but I truſt ſhall never deſtroy me. It hath pleaſed thee, O my bleſſed Saviour, to conclude all things under ſin, that thy grace may abound, while I ſtrive againſt it, and am afflicted for it, my ſinful deſires will (I truſt) be graciouſly accepted, and (in thy perfect obedience) glorioufly rewarded.

Be not diſmayed therefore, O my ſoul, that thou ſometimes art raviſhed with apprehenſion of thy heavenly joys, and ſuddenly relapſed to the follies of a wretched heart; the one thou happily enjoyeſt, by the ſweet aſſiſtance of the heavenly Spirit; the other thou violently ſuffereſt by the ſtrong torrent of my ſinful nature. Lord, ſuch is thy great wiſdom, and inconceivable goodneſs towards me, that often times thou leaveſt me unto my ſelf, and therefore ſuffereſt me to fall, (and that moſt grievouſly ſometimes) that I may ſee mine own infirmities, and be truly humbled for them; that I may impute nothing to mine own merits, but give all the glory to thy ſufferings; that I may go out of my ſelf, and mine own miſery, into the ſweet enjoyment of thy rich, and endleſs mercy.

Conſider therefore, O my ſoul, that ſo long as thou continueſt in this valley of tears, thou canſt not live without this burthen of ſin; ſo long as thou carrieſt this frail body about thee, continuing weakneſs will be attending on thee. O let this teach thee to bewail the miſery of this frail life, which is only prone to evil,

and

and that continually; let it humble thee for thy many failings, and invite thee to a more hearty and sincere affection to thy Saviour, by whose absolute and perfect obedience, all thine imperfections shall be done away; and lastly, to a more earnest longing for thy bodies dissolution.

Comfort thy self in this, that all the miseries of this life shall work together for the best to thine advantage, nothing can befal thee without his holy providence that so dearly loveth thee, even thy very sins shall further thee to Heaven; if thou hast now fallen, through the infirmity of thy corrupt nature, God will raise thee, by this fall of thine, to more perfection in goodness, to more vigilance, to more holiness, to more courage, to more constancy, in thy Christian Calling: for, *The Lord ordereth a good mans goings, and maketh his way acceptable unto him; though he fall he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him*, Psalm 37.23,24. and if that evil one be powerfully malicious, the greater shall thy joy and triumph be, when thou art happily victorious.

Lord, how truly blessed is the condition of thy Saints? who compellest even the rage of earth and hell to work for their advantage: *why art thou then so sad, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? still trust in God, for he is the help of thy countenance, and thy God*, Psal. 42. 15.

Lord, how sad is my condition without thee? thou (who alone knoweſt the secrets of all hearts) knoweſt that I love thee, that I long for thee, that I desire nothing in comparison of thee

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my God, and yet thou findeſt nothing but pollution in me: ſometimes I beg to be at union with thee, and ſometimes live as if I cared not for mercy from thee; ſtill I ſin, and ſtill thou forgiveſt: yea, I am therefore the more ready to rebel againſt thee, becauſe thou, Lord, art moſt ready to be merciful unto me; and yet for all this (ſuch are thy bowels of compaſſion towards me) thou bemoaneſt mine iniquity, thou inviteſt, thou compelleſt me to mercy.

Lord, wilt thou ſtill ſuffer me to abuſe thy goodneſs? I have often run from thee, by relapſing into grievous ſins, and thou, O Lord, as often haſt received me to favour, and afforded me the ſweet refreſhings of thy holy Spirit; I confeſs my ſelf unworthy to enjoy that bleſſed Spirit which I have ſo often grieved: O let this teach me to be truly and ſincerely thankful unto thee, to love thee more heartily, praiſe thee more joyfully, ſerve thee more faithfully, to my lives end.

For thou, O bleſſed Lord, art all in all unto me, thou art ſtrength in my weakneſs, love in my wilfulneſs, life in my ſinfulneſs; thou alone knoweſt under what great evils of ſin, under what ſad preſſures of ſorrow I daily groan, and thou haſt promiſed to eaſe thoſe weary ſouls, that cry to thee for ſuccour and relief.

Lord ſave me, or I periſh; Lord eaſe me of this heavy burden, that I ſink not to eternal miſery; give me thy ſaving grace, to guide me from theſe woful ways of wickedneſs; O let this hour put an end to this ſin: Lord, lead me unto thy paths, and uphold me there, that my feet ſlip not; ſuffer me not to feed upon theſe empty huſks,

O satisfie me with thy mercy, and that soon, before I go hence, and be no more seen.

My spirit is willing (O Lord) but my flesh is weak; have pity upon me, have pity upon me, for I am in misery.

Lord cover my sins, Lord pardon mine infirmities, Lord Jesus accept of me, and interpose thy blessed merits for me.

Lord raise me from this wretched fall; support my weakness, renew my repentance, increase my faith, quicken my zeal, that so by thy gracious assistance, I may be raised to more purity, to more perfection, in my Christian calling; that where sin hath abounded, there grace may abound much more, to thy great glory, and mine own endless comfort.

O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord consider and do it, defer not for thine own sake, O my God. Amen.

CHAP. XXVII.

Upon Desertion.

WHile I am in this pilgrimage of sin, I cannot be without this portion of sorrow; why complain I of that which I have so justly deserved? how often hath my God afforded me the gracious visits of this blessed Spirit? and yet how easily have I regarded them? Lord, I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, much less of this invaluable favour, to enjoy the kisses of thy sacred mouth: as I am now grieved for the loss of thy presence, so I have too often grieved thee by mine own rebellious absence; this is the sad condition even of the best of thy Saints in this life; as they have

have had their aberations from grace, so they have had their fluctuations in woe; these sad departings of thy blessed Spirit have ever been the just memorials of their present griefs, and former miseries.

I see thy holy servant *David* sadly bemoaning this great loss, and almost despairing of the enjoyment of thy gracious presence, I hear him crying out in bitterness of soul, *Will the Lord absent himself for ever, and will he shew no more favour? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he shut up his tender mercy in displeasure?* Psal. 77. 7, 8, 9.

How grievous was this complaint? how gracious thine answer? even in the very minute of distress, even by the very lips of the distressed, for it follows in a breath, *And I said this is my death, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most high.*

Jonah's extremity was thy blessed opportunity; even when *Jonah* thought himself in most danger of perishing, he then found thy mercy most ready in relieving, when he thought himself cast out of thy sight, even then he found himself looking to thy presence, and ready to be received into thy favour, *Jonah* 2. 4.

Lord, if thou givest me but the least measure of true faith, I shall be able to remove the greatest mountains of sin, and know assuredly to my souls exceeding comfort, that thou hidest thy face from me but for a moment in this life, that thou mayst gather me to everlasting kindness in that to come.

Comfort thy self in this therefore (O my

Soul) that God will never leave thee, that he will never forsake thee, that he will never leave thee totally, nor forsake thee finally; that he hath not now withdrawn his gracious presence from thee, but the present comfort of his grace from working in thee, as there are sad desertions, so there will undoubtedly be gracious visits; thou mayest be forsaken in sin, in the suffering of punishment for sin, in the severity of that punishment, in the fearful apprehension of Gods wrath in this severity; but assure thy self, (O my soul) thou shalt never be forsaken in the final execution of this wrath, in the eternal duration of this final execution.

Lord, if my hopes of heaven were grounded on the weak foundation of mine own abilities, If mine Election were but temporary, I might justly fear this dissertion would prove eternal; but now my comfort is, that Christ is my strong rock, on whom I am safely built; that nothing can separate me from his love; that his Decree of mine Election is particular, sweet, sure, and eternal; that the happy means appointed to this blessed end, is faith, holiness, righteousness and sanctification; holiness to obey the precepts, faith to embrace thy promises, righteousness to enjoy thy saints, and sanctification to possess my self: Thy blessed Decree (O Lord) is so far from giving me liberty to commit sin, that it most undoubtedly restrains me from it; If I cannot make my calling and election sure, by thy decreed means of sanctification, I shall never make my comfort sure by my vain hopes of glorification.

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If I look upon *Noah*, *Lot*, *David*, *Jacob*, *Jonah*, *Christ* himself, I shall there see the several and the sorrowful degrees of this Desertion: *Noah* and *Lot* fearfully sinning, *David* a long time resting in sin, and wofully deprived of Gods gracious presence for sin; *Jonah*, even doubting of Gods favour, in the suddenness, and the sharpness of his punishment; and thou O my blessed Saviour, affrighted with the fierceness of thy Fathers wrath for sin, and for a time (as thou were man) despairing of his gracious presence.

Be not afraid therefore, O my soul; for as thou art deserted for thy sins sake, so thou art beloved for thy Saviour's sake; though he *hide himself behind the wall*, (of thy corruption) yet he will graciously *look through the lattice* (of thine humiliation) *Cant.* 2. 9. Even this thy present sadness will afford thee some refreshings, some gracious glimpses of his holy Spirit; and though thy heart be now disquieted within thee, thou shalt again assuredly receive the voice of joy and gladness. Lord let this teach me to abhor those sins that have deprived me of thy presence; to seek earnestly to enjoy thee; to rise early to find thee whom my soul loveth; to settle mine affections upon thy beauty, mine actions upon thy service, that I may be guided by thy grace in this life, and encompass with thy glory in that to come.

For thou, O my blessed Saviour, art infinitely dearer to me than the choicest of these earthly vanities; their love is false and uncertain, but thine true and eternal; abundantly sufficient to rejoyce me here, to enrich me hereafter.

O Lord my God, my soul longeth for thee, I am weary of the sins and miseries of this life, and nothing can relieve me but thy blessed presence: O make thy face to shine upon me, and save me for thy mercy sake.

My God, my God, look upon me, why hast thou forsaken me, and art so far from the words of my complaint? O satisfie my longings, for thou knowest, Lord, that I love thee.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and hide not thy face from my supplications, O hide not thy self from me, nor cast thy servant away in displeasure.

Thou hast been my succour, therefore leave me not, nor forsake me, O God of my salvation: Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and save me for thy mercy sake.

O lead me from the bondage of sin, into the blessed liberty of thy children, that I may be comforted in the sweetness of thy promises, and thou mayst be delighted in the zeal of my performances.

Give me the comfort of thy help again, and stablish me with thy free Spirit; O hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble, make haste and hear me.

Lord, I am defiled with sin, and disquieted with sorrow, I am daily vexed with temptations, and hourly overcome with vanity, I am wretchedly infolded in the miseries of mine own corruptions, and wofully beguiled by the divels subtilties; O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me?

Lord, I bewail my misery, and implore thy mercy; O that I were this hour at union with thee, that I might hereafter joyfully adhere unto thee, be graciously accepted of thee, and for ever gloriously exalted by thee. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Upon the apprehension of ſuddain danger.

BLeſſed God, I know that nothing can befal me without thy holy providence, even this preſent danger is by thine appointment, and what thou haſt deſigned it unto, I know not, I enquire not; Lord give me a ſweet and ſafe aſſurance that I am thine, and then do with me what thou wilt: O let me live, and I ſhall praiſe thee, and thy judgments ſhall help me; but if thou haſt appointed me this hour to die, O let me then go home unto thee, and be united in a ſafer, in a ſweeter union with thee. Lord hear me, and have mercy on me, for my dear Saviour's ſake, who hath given his precious life a ranſom for me.

Preſerve me, O God, for in thee have I put my truſt; forſake me not, O Lord my God, be not thou far from me.

Lord, ſtrengthen and ſupport my wavering faith, forgive me all my ſins, and ſuffer not my ſoul to be ſurpriſed in my laſt extremity.

Haſt thee to help me, O Lord God of my ſalvation, for thy names ſake, for thy promiſe ſake, for thy precious bloud ſake.

Into thy hand I commend my ſpirit, for thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.

CHAP. XXIX.

Upon the weakneſs of Faith, and ſinfulneſs of Thoughts tending to Deſpair.

HOW much art thou miſtaken, (O my Soul) to think thy ſelf then fartheſt off from God, when thou art neareſt unto him; to ſuppoſe thy ſelf then moſt wretched, when thou art neareſt to the paths of happineſs? He that never doubted, never truly believed; and he that hath leaſt aſſurance in himſelf, will have moſt certainty in Chriſt.

Thou haſt ſinned, and thou art ſorrowful; thou haſt committed great and grievous ſins, and thou abhorreſt them, thou forſakeſt them, thou heartily deſireſt pardon for them; if thou hadſt not a godly ſorrow, thou couldſt not have this godly deſire, if thy ſorrow were for puniſhment, it would cauſe thy death, but now it is for ſin, it will lead thee to repentance; if thou grieveſt not ſo much for the ſevere ſentence of an incenſed Judge, as for the diſpleaſure of a good and gracious Father, as thou ſoweſt in tears, thou ſhalt reap in joy, nay, thou ſhalt have great joy even in theſe tears, thou ſhalt have much ſweetneſs even in this ſorrow; and if ſeed-time be ſweet, how bleſſed will thy harveſt be? hear what thy Saviour ſaith, *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted*; in ſorrows here, in eternity of joys hereafter: who can curſe, where God hath bleſſed? what Devil can deject, where God will exalt?

Thou art grieved for offending thy gracious God, and thou imploreſt him for mercy; com-

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fort thyſelf in this, that *God is near unto all thoſe which call upon him, yea that call upon him faithfully*, Pſal. 105. 18. Be not afraid therefore; for if thy faith be weak, yet it is living; if it be languiſhing, it will aſſuredly recover more ſtrength; if there be bloſſoms now, there will be fruit hereafter; theſe happy beginnings will have gracious proceedings, bleſſed endings.

Conſider what thy God hath promiſed by his holy Prophet, *I will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax*, Iſa. 42. 3. Let not the ſmarting (therefore) of thy conſcience trouble thee, remember who it is that ſearcheth it, *I have wounded thee* (ſaith God) *and I will heal thee, I have broken thee, and I will bind thee up.* Thou art therefore wounded, that thou mayeſt be healed; thou art therefore broken, that thou mayſt be bound up: That ſore which is inſenſible, is ever moſt dangerous; and that wound which ſmarteth moſt, is moſt capable of remedy.

Bleſſed Lord, I now feel, to mine unſpeakable comfort, that thou haſt wounded me with the terrours of thy Law, that thou mayſt heal me with the comforts of thy Goſpel; that I am therefore bruiſed with the burdens of my ſins, that I may be ever eaſed by the merits of my Saviours ſufferings; all my imperfections are his, all his righteouſneſs is mine. I may boldly challenge it, thou wilt not deny it. I may ſafely plead it, thou canſt not refuſe it.

Conſider yet further, O my Soul, what thy bleſſed Saviour ſaith unto thee, *I am the reſurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever liveth*

and believeth in me shall never die, Joh. 11. 25, 26.

How canst thou doubt now (O my Soul) when thy Saviour biddeth thee believe, and live? what canst thou fear, when thou hast his promise for thy safety? Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one tittle of his Word shall fail.

Let not the number of thy sins affright thee, for it is *his blood which cleanseth us from all iniquity*, 1 Joh 1. 7. 9.

Let not the nature of thy sins amaze thee, for *though they were red as scarlet, yet he will make them white as snow.*

Let not the long continuance of them stagger thee, for *At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sin, from the bottom of his heart, I will blot them out of my remembrance*, saith the Lord, Ezech. 18.

Thy Conscience shall not trouble thee, for *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God*, Rom. 5. 1.

The Devil cannot hurt thee, for *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*, Rom. 8. 32, 33.

Nay (which is the sum of all) God himself in Justice cannot condemn thee, for *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, Rom. 8. 1. his Justice is satisfied, his Mercy magnified, his Name for ever glorified.

Lord, let this teach me to rely with comfort on thy blessed promises, and to walk worthy of them,

them, in my religious performances; to manifeſt my increaſe of grace, by my increaſe of goodneſs; to fix my heart wholly upon thee, to love thee, to fear thee, to honour thee, and aſſuredly to reſt in thee; when thy grace ſhall enable me to delight in thy fear, my ſins can never perſwade me to deſpair of thy favour: my peace will be then inviolable, my joy unutterable, my happineſs unalterable.

Bleſſed Lord God,

When I conſider of the wretchedneſs of mine own corruptions in nature, I am even ready to deſpair of thy love; But when I look upon the bleſſedneſs of my condition in Chriſt, I am then encouraged to ſue to thee for mercy and forgiveneſs: Although thy juſtice be ſevere againſt me, as I am a grievous ſinner, yet thy mercy is moſt ſweet unto me in my Saviour.

I now tremble at thy judgments, yet I rejoyce in thy promiſes; although thy Law ſpeak never ſo terribly, thy curſes be never ſo many, thy plagues be never ſo grievous, thy wrath never ſo tempeſtuous, yet in the ſweet mercy of my Saviour I am able to abide them all.

O Lord my God, I abhor my ſelf, I accuſe my ſelf, I condemn my ſelf, I am now ready with thy wrath to ſeize upon my ſinful ſoul, and caſt it down to everlaſting miſery.

Lord, unto thee only I appeal for mercy and forgiveneſs: ſweet Jeſus accept of me, and interpoſe thy bleſſed merits for me; inrich my ſoul with thy ſufferings, be ever preſent with me, and eternal comfort to me.

O holy and for ever bleſſed Spirit, thou that ſanctifieſt the ſouls of thine Elect, aſſiſt and

strengthen me; quicken and revive my drooping faith, increase my hope, cherish my love, foment those dying sparks, by the sweet breathings of thy blessed Spirit, that they may zealously break forth in a pure and fervent flame of holy affections, to thy great glory, and mine own eternal happiness. Amen.

CHAP. XXX.

Upon the great Neglect of the duty of Prayer.

Lord,

WHen I seriously consider how manifold and great my fallings are, when I think of the shortness and uncertainty of life, of the solemnity of death, of the eternity of happiness, of misery after death, and by all these of the necessity, usefulness, and excellency of Prayer, I may well wonder that I am ever from my knees.

My life is all sin, and had therefore need to be all sorrow; the greatness and continuance of my sins have added to the greatness and continuance of my misery, and there is none but thou (O Lord) that can relieve me; there is no coming to thee but by Prayer, and no Prayer powerful with thee, but that which is fervent.

This is that eye of my affection that woundeth the heart of thy compassion; this is that holy violence that taketh Heaven by force, that surpriseth thy Mercy, that manicles thy Justice, that wrestles with thy Love, and will not let thee go without a blessing: This is my strong armour to defend me, my daily food to sustain me, my safe repose to refresh me, my sweet content for ever to delight me. Blessed

Blessed Lord, how wonderful is thy desire to man? how graciously doest thou provide for him? how daily art thou mindful of him? Thy words instruct me, thy promises allure me, thy graces sustain me, thy sacraments strengthen me, thy visits comfort me, thy embraces ravish me; And, as if all this were not yet enough to manifest thy favour towards me, so unspeakable is thy love, so earnest thy desires unto me, that thou hast even given me thy self, to be overcome by me. Lord, thou art all love, when I strive with thee for mercy, I overcome thee by thy self; how great is thy goodness? how tender are thy mercies unto man, for whose sake thou contendest even with thine own Essence? Thou hast given thy Son to die for me, and in him thy self to be overcome by me.

Lord, let this teach me to renew my acquaintance often with thee, to labour to be powerful in my prayers; to study to be humble, zealous, earnest, even importunate in my devotions; to let no sinful thought pass me without a sigh, no sinful action without holy contrition, no divine favours, without devout and thankful acknowledgement; That soul which is truly sensible of the burden of Sin, will hasten unto that heavenly help that can give it ease; and that heart which is once truly inflamed with thy love, will readily instruct the tongue to be zealous in thy praise. Lord, let me first seek mine own heart, before I presume to come before thy Mercy seat, lest if I recall it not from the vanities of this life, my very prayers become sin, and so while I expect a blessing, I deserve a curse.

Let no vain excuse, no barren pretence of this life, perswade me to intermit this holy duty, lest carelesness, and coldness in devotion, beget in me a loathing of that course, which by constant practise will become my constant comfort: Lord, make me to consider of the sweetness, of the excellency of this gift, that I may daily labour to improve it to my souls eternal happiness; That when I often fall (as I needs must through the weakness of the flesh) thou, O Lord, in mercy mayst restore me through my blessed importunity of Spirit.

With grief of heart (Lord) I confess, that my great neglect of this holy duty, hath most justly occasioned the great abatement of thy holy Spirit in me, and long withholdings of thine outward blessings from me.

Lord, give me yet an heart to serve thee, and then take from me what thou wilt: I desire nothing without thee, for I know assuredly, that with thee I cannot but enjoy all things needful for me.

O make me to bewail mine own unworthiness, my drowsiness, my dulness, my carelessness, my much untowardness in thy service: Create in me a clean heart (O Lord) and renew a right spirit within me, that I may praise thee with alacrity and fervency of soul; that I may be daily ravished with contemplation of eternity, and beauty satisfie my thoughts with apprehension of the sweetness of my present safety, of my future glory.

Lord, make me every day more earnest in this holy duty; O give me such affectionate desires; such holy longings, such insatiate appetites, such earnest importunities of heart for heavenly graces,

graces, that I may not onely beg of thee, but even wrestle with thee for this blessing, although the sinful desires of my corrupt flesh go halting to the grave.

Be merciful unto me (O Lord) for my soul trusteth in thee, and in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities (of sins and miseries) be overpast.

Lord, hear the voice of my humble Petitions when I cry unto thee, when I hold up my hands towards thy mercy seat, shew thy servant the light of thy countenance, and save me for thy mercy sake, Ps. 28. 2. Ps. 31. 18.

CHAP. XXXI.

Upon the great neglect of Reading the sacred Scriptures.

ALas my soul, how unbeseeming thy profession is this thy backwardness to holy duties? how long wilt thou grovel on this Element of Earth? how long be cheated with these counterfeit commodities, these childish toys of outward enjoyments? what sweetness canst thou find in those things which savour of Corruption? what comfort in those joys which are but vain, vexatious, toylsom, transitory? whose seeming beauties are suddenly passing, never returning: O let this move thee to delight in that which cannot pass, to remember whence thou art, and whether thou art going; that thou mayst thereby raise thy thoughts to immortality.

Look upon the beauty of those sacred leaves, and thou wilt loath the falshood of this worlds embraces; Thou mayst there find the sum of

all that was, or is, or is to come, conducing to thy real happineſs; There is nature unbowelled, hell opened, and heaven unveiled; Thou mayſt there ſee the creature to be vanity, thy ſelf miſery, thy Saviour felicity; Thou haſt there his counſel to guide thee, his wiſdom to inſtruct thee, his power to ſuſtain thee, his gifts to encourage thee, his threatnings to admoniſh thee, his mercies to allure thee, his judgments to deter thee, his holy Spirit to comfort thee: There is antiquity, ſtrangeneſs, truth, in hiſtory, wonder in miracles, amazement in propheſie, ſoundneſs in precepts, ſweetneſs in promiſes; each ſillable contained in this Book, is matter of eternal moment. Take heed therefore, that thou paſſeſt by no portion of this ſacred volum lightly, nor pryeſt into any preſumptuouſly; holy diligence is often bleſt with heavenly knowledge, and humble ignorance with heavenly grace.

Lord, ſeeing that thy word is in it ſelf ſo excellently rich, and in its uſe ſo abſolutely good, with what earneſtneſs of ſoul ought I to embrace it? with what holy diligence peruſe it? with what devout chearfulneſs, and conſtancy of heart, apply my ſelf unto it? Theſe high perfections ſhall religiouſly oblige me to repair my former neglects, by my preſent promiſes of my future performances.

No day ſhall henceforth paſs me, without ſome time alotted for this holy exerciſe, cuſtom will make it eaſie, profit ſweet; if the troubleſom affairs of this life do ſometimes (to my ſouls grief) diſturb me in it (by thy grace aſſiſting) they ſhall never divert me from it; what is borrowed

rowed from this blessed task, by inforced necessity, shall be repayed with advantage by the next happy opportunity. Lord, all is but vanity and meer nothing, in compare of thee, and thy service: If I cannot be willingly holy, I shall never be joyfully happy.

Blessed Lord,

Sanctifie my sinful soul, that I may joyfully perform those promises I make unto thee, that I may daily dedicate some part and portion of my sinful hours, to read some portion of thy sacred Scriptures: O let them ever be the joy of my joy, the life of my life, the light of mine eyes, and comfort of my heart.

Lord, turn away mine eyes (from those outward enjoyments) lest they behold vanity, and quicken me in thy way.

Give me an humble soul, that I may read thy blessed lines with holy fear, and awful reverence; that I may be plously delighted with them and happily instructed by them.

Give me a discerning soul, that I may see the wonderful things of thy law, that I may truly love it, and delight in it, that my heart may be inflamed by it, and my tongue to be ever talking of it.

O let thy Statutes be my song in the house of my pilgrimage, that I may walk in thy ways with constancy, that I may run in thy race with fervency. Amen.

CHAP. XXXII.

Upon the neglect of Divine Meditation.

What doest thou here on Earth, O my soul? why art thou so perplexed with the

the cares and sorrows of this sinful life? so careless of the joys in that to come? Who can judge him likely to inherit Heaven, that loves not to think of it? Thou mayest measure thy degrees of grace, by thy desires of Glory: If thy thoughts be not often, and earnestly taken up with this subject, thou hast just cause to suspect thy loving it, to fear thy enjoying it; for, *Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.*

If thou livest the life of Pleasure, thou art so much worse than a beast, by how much thou oughtest by reason to be better; if of Action, thou art so much nearer to happiness, as reason is beyond sense, and yet so much farther off, as Grace is beyond Nature; if the happy life of heavenly Meditation, thou art so far above vanity, as heaven is above earth, as immortality above nature, as glory above corruption.

O how sweet are those thoughts which lead me to Eternity, which raise my soul above the reach of humane misery, that can support me under all the heavy pressures of sin, under all the grievous burdens of sorrow, under all the sharp assaults of Satan; that can make me merry in life, and triumphant in death.

Nothing can more truly represent me to my self, and inform me that I am all earthly, than the dulness and backwardness of my thoughts to be heavenly. Who can ever hope to be an Inhabitant of that City, whose language he cannot speak? Lord, when my thoughts are more zealously affected with thy heavenly joys, I shall then hope to be more frequently acquainted with thy heavenly visits; by

by my careleſs neglect of the one, I am now juſtly deprived of the ſweet enjoyments of the other; while I am wedded to this wretched world, my thoughts muſt needs ſavour of corruption: But if thou, Lord, wilt once open mine eyes to ſee the glorious beauty of my heavenly home, I ſhall then know, and joyfully confeſs, that one hour thus ſpent, will add more comfort to my ſoul, more true content to my deſires, than all theſe outward bleſſings, and I ſhall then account, and joyfully confeſs with my Apoſtle, that all things are but loſs, and dung, in compare of the richneſs of thy love in Chriſt Jeſus.

For thou, O bleſſed Saviour, art the bleſſed Fauntain of eternal happineſs, the joy of my heart, the triumph of my joy, the comfort of my life, the ſafety of my body, the reſt of my ſoul, without thee I am far worſe than nothing, and with thee I enjoy all things; for thou art in the Father, and I in thee, and thou in me; and in this happy union is contained that fruition, is injoyed that for ever bleſſed viſion, in which the ſouls and bodies of thy Saints eternally delight themſelves. O thou ſoveraign of my ſouls eternal comfort, how unworthy am I to enjoy thee, that have been hitherto ſo much unmindful of thee, how undeſerving to behold thee in that glory, that am ſo daily guilty of thy great dishonour. Lord raiſe my thoughts to immortality, and fix my ſoul upon the love of thine eternity; let my chiefeſt joy be ever to contemplate thee, who art my chiefeſt good.

Pardon theſe wretched hours that have been loſt in ſearch of outward happineſs; O make me to

to redeem them, by abandoning the creature, and placing my affections wholly on the beauty of the great Creator, expatiate my sinful soul with daily meditations of my future joys, that I may love thee more fervently, fear thee more dutifully, desire thee more earnestly, long for thee more heartily, embrace thee more faithfully, and think of thee more joyfully, to my lives end. Amen.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Upon Unchristianlike Dejectedness in Poverty.

WHY do I excruciate my self with apprehension of a seeming evil? how unworthy am I of this life, which I hold from that God, whom I dare not trust? will God feed me with the delicates of heaven, and not give me bread? will he give me full draughts, of the rivers of his eternal pleasures, and not afford me temporal refreshments? shall my death be precious in his eyes, and my life uncomfortable in mine own? can there be any evil, and the Lord hath not done it? shall he do it, and shall I complain? if poverty be evil in it self, yet it is good for me; the evil of sin hath drawn upon me this evil of punishment; so this evil is from nature, and the good from grace? By this affliction I am weaned from the world, and made desirous of my heavenly home; I am now put in mind, that my treasure being there, my heart should be there also; I am now fully assured (by my patience and humility under this affliction, and by the quiet fruits of righteousness it daily bringeth

eth forth in me) that I am Gods child; that as I am now made partaker of my Saviour's ſufferings, ſo I ſhall be hereafter of his glory; that I part with earthly contentments, to enjoy heavenly comforts. Lord, when thou lendeſt me thy ſtaff of conſolation, I ſhall be well able to endure thy rod of affliction; although my body be worſe, I ſhall then find my ſoul to be much better, my preſent condition happy, my future bleſſed.

In what eſtate ſoever I am, I will think that beſt, becauſe thou (Lord) haſt put me there: if my calling be low, my account will be the leſs? if I diſcharge this faithfully, I ſhall not loſe my reward. Thou O Lord, lookeſt not upon my greatneſs, but my goodneſs, my faithfulneſs in thy ſervice: a pin in thy material Temple was as uſeful as a ſtone; If I be any thing in thy ſpiritual, it is enough; yet, let me not content my ſelf with eaſineſs and indifferency in heavenly bleſſings, but labour to ſupply mine outward wants by inward graces; ſo ſhall this earthly bitterneſs be turned into ſpiritual ſweetneſs, and eternal bleſſedneſs.

Thou (O Lord) haſt allotted me my portion in this life, moſt agreeable to thy divine Wiſdom, moſt ſuitable to my frail condition; and why take I then thought for to morrow? ſufficient unto the day is the evil thereof: Thou alloweſt me lawful means for increaſing of it, thou forbiddeſt me repining thoughts to diſtruſt thee in it; Lord let me firſt ſeek thy Kingdom, and the righteouſneſs thereof, and then I know aſſuredly, that all things needful for me ſhall be added to me.

O thou blessed Saviour of the world, who for my sake wert willing to endure the scornful poverty of this life, to purchase my redemption, teach me by thine example, and for thy sake, to undervalue all the glorious pomps of these enticing vanities, that though my body be despised by the world, my sinful soul may be accepted with thee, and both soul and body may eternally be happy where thou art.

Lord, by how much (by thy great sufferings) thou wert made the vilder for me, by so much (by thy rich mercy) let thy love be ever dearer to me.

O give me graces suitable to all events; let not prosperity puff me up, nor adversity too much deject me; but for thy mercy sake, let happiness in Christ be all in all unto me; make me humble in the one, patient in the other, thankful in either, happy in both.

Grant (Lord) that no ungodly care, or sinful sorrow, may disturb me, that I may with willingness, and thankfulness, and joyfulness of heart, contentedly rely upon thee.

Enrich my heart with heavenly thoughts, give me that better part which cannot be taken from me; Lord, what thou denyest me of these outward comforts, make good unto me by thine inward mercies, that all these earthly things may work together to the best to mine advantage, so shall my present poverty be an undoubted earnest of my future Glory. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Upon ſickneſs, and ungodly repining thereat.

AS every good and perfect gift is from above, ſo is alſo every puniſhment for ſin, by every proportion of ſorrow; *For miſery cometh not out of the duſt, neither doth affliction ſpring out of the earth,* Job 1. 5, 6. That Divine Goodneſs, which wiſely and affectionately diſpoſeth all things to the good of his choſen, by his holy providence hath ſuited their degrees, limited their powers, and appointed their ends, every pain in ſickneſs, every pang in death, have their juſt number, weight, and meaſure.

It is the Lord, let him do what he will; nothing can befal me, but by his Divine allowance; nothing ſhall diſmay me, that my God inflicteth on me: if my viſitation be grievous, I am ſure it is ſafe; *For he chaſtiſeth me for my profit, that I may be partakers of his holineſs.*

Bleſſed be that ſorrow which allureth me from ſin, bleſſed be that miſery that inviteth me to mercy, I kiſs it, I embrace it, and with humbleneſs of heart I joyfully and patiently ſubmit unto it: *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh, bleſſed be the name of the Lord,* Job 1. 21.

I humbly confeſs (Lord) that my great and grievous ſins have moſt juſtly deſerved this great and grievous affliction, that thou mighteſt long ſince have deprived me of my life, for depriving thee of thine honour; that I am moſt unworthy of this thy gentle viſitation, for I am full of rottenneſs and corruption, and therefore

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can expect no other, but to be fill'd with sorrow and affliction; thou hast given me a body for thy service, but I have defiled it with sin and wickedness; thou gavest me a soul enriched with thy heavenly graces, but I have defaced it with unthankfulness and disobedience; no faculty of my soul, no member of my body, but are most impure, and sinful in thy sight. Thou (O Lord) knowest all my foolishness, and my faults are not hid from thee; thou seest how vainly I have mis-spent my precious time, how carelessly abused that continued health which thou hast given me; how seriously been busied on the Creature, how wretchedly neglected thee the great Creator.

Thou hast often weaned me from sin, by thy blessed motions, by thy gracious admonitions, by thy gentle visitations, by a wasted body, and a wounded soul; and yet I still sin, without ceasing, without sorrowing, without repenting; such are my faults, so grievous mine offences; that I now blush to name those sins before thee, by which I have so often and so foolishly rebell'd against thee: and now after all this, although thou hast with lasting patience waited my return, and art forced to withdraw thy present mercy, yet thou art moved to behold my present misery; even in thy very wrath thou hast compassion on me, *Habac.* 3. 2. while thou seemest (by this present sickness) to withhold thy favour from me, thou graciously intendest, by this blessed means, to shew thy self more lovingly unto me; for, *I know Lord, that thy judgments are just, and that thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled,* Psal 119. 15.

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Therefore, *Though thou killest me, yet will I trust in thee,* Job 13. 15. *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil,* Psal. 32. 4. Behold Lord, I am willingly, and joyfully, and thankfully in thy hands, do with me what thou wilt; if I live, I shall praise thee, if I die (I trust) I shall go home unto thee, and be for ever blessed with thee.

O thou Father of mercies, and God of all Consolations, behold me thy sick servant, with thine eye of pity and compassion; O remember not my former sins, but have mercy upon me (O Lord) and that soon, for I am come unto great extremity.

O Lord my God, I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long; thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me possess the iniquities of my youth; O let the sweetness of thy mercy qualifie the sharpness of thy fatherly correction; consider me, O Lord, that I am but dust, full of frailties and infirmities, forgive me for thy mercy sake.

Remember not the sinful failings of my youth, but according to the richness of thy goodness, be thou mindful of me.

O righteous Father, look not on the multitude and hainousness of mine offences, but look upon the bitter passion of thy blessed Son, he was wounded for my transgressions, he was broken for mine iniquities, O by his (Blessed) stripes let my sinful soul be healed.

Enable me to suffer this thy gentle visitation, with that meekness, and contentedness of soul, that becometh thy child; and so bless it unto me, that it may bring forth in me the quiet and the

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happy fruit of righteousnes, that it may drive my thoughts to immortality, and fix my soul upon eternity.

Blessed Lord, my hope is in thee, my soul trusteth in thee, and under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, until this misery be overpast. O Lord consider my complaint, for I am brought very low.

Let my present anguish more prevail with thee, to move thee to compassion, than my former foolishness, to stir thy wrath and indignation, O enter not into judgment with thy servant, for no flesh is righteous in thy sight.

Lord, I confess my wickedness, and am sorry for my sin; for thy Names sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great; my confusion is daily before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me; my heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me: Lord, I am thine, O save me for thy mercy sake; into thy hands I commend my self, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord thou God of Truth.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, be not thou far from me, haste thee to help me, O Lord God of my salvation. O spare me, for thy mercy sake, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen. Amen.

CHAP. XXXV.

Upon the misery of life, and blessedness of death.

I Am a Pilgrim, and a Stranger here, as all my Fathers were, I am wearied with travel, and long to be at rest; I am lodged here but with great cost, and greater danger; this seeming sweetness hath cost me much true sorrow, many bitter sighs, and aking hearts, disturbance

ſturbance of body, diſtraction of ſoul; I have ſought for help here below, but can find none, no creature on Earth to relieve me, none to ſupport me; I have ſeen pleaſure to be folly, and laughter madneſs, men of low degree to be vanity, of high degree a lye, their underſtanding vain, their labours vain, their help much more vain; for who can ranſom the ſoul of his brother, ſure man muſt let that alone for ever. My ſubſtance is a meer ſhadow, and my reſt unquietneſs; I labour for holineſs, but I cannot attain it; I ſearch for happineſs, but I cannot find it; the Devil beguiles me of it, the World allures me from it; yea, (ſo ſad is my condition) that mine own ſoul is againſt mine own contentment. My underſtanding couſens me, mine affections betray me, my memory forſakes me; thoſe things which I would do, I cannot and I daily do thoſe things which I would not; all that I am, all that I can be in this life, is nothing elſe but extream vanity.

What ſhall I think of all this? and wherewith ſhall I comfort me? by thy mercy, Lord, I have found out one that can relieve me, Thou (O my bleſſed Saviour) art unto me life, and by thee death is unto me advantage; while my body ſleeps it ſhall reſt, and that reſt ſhall be truly bleſſed; I ſhall reſt from labour, from ſorrow, from ſin; my ſleep ſhall be ſafe, my viſion happy; while my body ſleepeth my ſoul ſhall awake; when my ſoul is uncloathed of fleſh, and fleſh of beauty, my ſpirit ſhall be made ready with the robes of glory; while my duſt is inſenſible, my Spirit is intelligible; mine eyes ſhall be then opened, and I ſhall ſee

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even as I am seen, with purity, and perfection of soul; no veil of nature shall obscure me, no defect of organs hinder me, no clouds of sin molest me; mine understanding shall be clear, mine affections pure, my memory perfect, I shall there be satisfied in beholding, ravished in injoying, blessed in retaining: nothing can be there wanting, where I enjoy all that was, that is, that is to come; where the happy humanity is eternally united to the blessed deity, where I am Christs, and Christ is Gods. O happy condition of my sinful body, O blessed change of my immortal soul, the one is sown in corruption that it may rise to immortality; the other layeth down corruption, to inherit glory; though I now leave it, I still long to enjoy it, and joy exceedingly in longing for it, because I know I shall for ever be united to it.

But wo is me, even in this happiness I am still miserable, I have found out my quiet, but I care not to enjoy it; death offers me a crown, and I refuse to accept it; am I so senseless to affect mine own unhappiness? to rejoyce in labour, and complain of rest? what do I here any longer? the world loves me not, nor I it: why do I thus dote upon mine enemy? when it frowns, it afflicts me, when it smiles, it betrays me; there is nothing in it but weariness and misery.

Go out therefore, O my soul, go out chearfully, from thy prison to thy palace, God is thy father, and Heaven thy country; thou art here distressed, poor, and wretchedly naked, bereaved of graces, dispoiled of goodness, thou hast there much treasure, and of great price,

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a fair mansion, and a goodly heritage; Christ hath purchased it, and is gone before to prepare it: Thou longest much in this life to behold that which thou never sawest; here are great and glorious things prepared for thee, such as eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entred into the heart of man to conceive; how earnestly shouldst thou long to see them? how much more earnestly to enjoy them? how willingly should this make thee to express thy self with holy *David*, and say, *My soul is athirst for God, yea even for the living God, when shall I come and appear before the presence of my God.*

Alas, my soul, thou art here but groping in the dark, daily erring and mistaking, hourly stumbling and falling into sin, into shame, into sorrow; in great dangers of the miseries of life, in greater of the torments of eternal death.

All that thou knowest here, is to know thy self ignorant: Thou only knowest things here by their events, thou shalt there know them in their first causes; thou art here wearied out in gaining this imperfect, lame, and empty knowledge, thou shalt there delight thy self in knowing all that is desirable, by knowing him, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; these drops of transitory joys are full of bitterness, those rivers of eternal pleasures, are derived from the fountain of eternal sweetness; thou hast here vain pomp to delight thee, thou hast there a far greater and more exceeding weight of glory to encompass thee; thou art here enthralled by the misery of life, thou art there enlarged by the blessedness of death.

Blessed

Blessed Lord, all this by grace I know, and faithfully believe; and yet by nature I am still blind, and ignorant, unable to discern, unwilling to desire those blessed things which are belonging to mine everlasting peace, but when thou (in thy rich mercy) shalt once open mine eyes, to see the beauty of my heavenly home, I shall then entirely love it, and unfeignedly long for it; I shall then most willingly forsake these tottering walls of my frail flesh, to dwell with thee in perfect holiness and endless happiness, that frailty may be swallowed up of immortality, and immortality may be embraced by eternity.

O thou which wert, and art to come, who hast sweetned death by thy perfect obedience, and perfumed the grave by thy blessed sufferings, suffer me not in my last hour, for any pains of death, or terrours of hell, to fall from the fast hold of a true and lively faith, in thy promises, to lose the precious hopes of immortality, and sweet enjoyments of eternity.

Lord, let me then say with thy blessed Apostle, That I know whom I have trusted, that he will keep what I have delivered to him, and restore it safely unto me at that day.

Let me seriously consider of the misery of life, and blessedness of death; acquaint me every day with the remembrance of it, and bless me every hour with a desire unto it; that I may willingly uncloath my self of sin and misery, and joyfully be cloathed upon with immortality.

O Lord prepare me for that blessed hour, and in my greatest weakness and extremity even

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then when all the comforts of this wretched life shall fail me, Lord Jesus forsake me not, be not thou far from me.

O give me then that inward joy, that blessed comfort of thy holy Spirit, that may support and comfort me in all the terrors and amazements of this dark and unknown passage, in all the dreadful accusations of the devil, and mine own accusing conscience.

Lord, let thy blessed Spyrit then witness to my soul, that I am thy child, that thou wilt purge away all my dross, and take away all my sins; that I am powerfully protected by thy grace, and shall assuredly be made partakers of thy glory. Amen.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Upon the great Neglect of opportunities in doing good unto the Saints.

Lord,

WHen I call to mind the richness, and the largeness of thy bounty towards me, I am much grieved at the coldness, and the carelessness of my affections towards thine; each object of charity is an opportunity of mercy; If I neglect it, I am unkind to thee my Saviour, cruel to my neighbour, injurious to mine own soul.

I am not, Lord, but Steward of thine outward blessings, and it were now just with thee, to call me to a strict account: If any of thy Saints suffer, which thou sendest unto me for relief, their sufferings thou wilt surely require at my hands: as each cup of cold water of which

I have given in thy Name, shall not lose its reward, so each farthing which I owe unto thee in thy members, will assuredly require its everlasting punishment.

I have been too carefully solicitous for the things of this life, too carelesly negligent of the treasures in that to come; I have had many ways to deprive my self of my present comfort, of my future happiness; when my talent hath been large, I have had no leisure, when little, no ability to works of mercy. The present necessities of thy Saints have been daily neglected, upon the false pretence of future opportunities; and those future opportunities again put off by the dilatory plea of mine own present necessities. Thus have I long kept my self in a circulation of self-cozenage, and have so lived here as if I were never to go hence, and were utterly ignorant for what cause I came hither.

From whence is this my great neglect of charity towards my brethren, but from my greater want of love to thee, my God? and from whence my disobedience to thy precepts, but from mine unbelief of thy promises? Thou biddest me Give, and hast promised it shall be given unto me, good measure, shaken together, prelled down, and running over, *Luke 6. 38.* Thou commandest me not to be weary in well-doing, and hast promised, that in due time I shall reap, if I faint not, *Ephes. 6. 9.* If I did believe the one, I should gladly perform the other; and whose word shall I take (Lord) if I dare to question thine? All thy blessed promises are Yea and Amen, the beginning

ning sweet, the end certain; as thou hast bottle for my tears, and a bag for my transgressions, so thou hast also a book for mine Alms-deeds, *Acts* 10. 4. Not one of them shall be forgotten, but even the very least of them shall be graciously accepted, gloriously rewarded; not for my work sake, but for thy promise sake, not for mine own sake, but for my Saviour's sake: Lord, I can merit nothing at thy hands, but by thine own mercy.

And now, Lord, let me examine, What I have gained, by my want of charity. I have exchanged Heaven to enjoy earth, I have parted with thee my Saviour, in whom are all the treasures that are true and eternal, for the very basest part of earth, which is vain and uncertain; I have lost those blessed opportunities of doing good, which can never be recalled, and together with them, those rewards of thine, which shall never be enjoyed. I have offended thee my God, grieved thy Saints, burdened mine own conscience, and been an utter enemy to mine own salvation.

As my affections have been frozen towards others, so have I justly found the gifts and graces of thy holy Spirit, decaying daily in mine own soul; my love cold to thy law, mine ears deaf to thy precepts, my mouth dumb to thy praises; my faith dead to thy promises, my hope fainting, my zeal languishing, my joy perishing. These are the sad and sure effects of want of charity, the beginning sinful, the progress dangerous, the end desperate.

Lord, if those heavenly spirits, whose very names import their ardency of love to thy glo-

ry, are yet found cold enough in thy ſight, with what horrour and confuſion of face, will thoſe wretched Souls appear before thee, who have not been ſo much as luke-warm in thy ſervice.

By thy Grace (Lord) I will therefore henceforth make a godly improvement of all future opportunities of doing good; whatſoever thine allowance is unto me, of theſe outward bleſſings, I will dedicate ſome due proportion of it unto works of mercy; and cheerfully, and thankfully truſt thee my God with the ſuſtentation of my body, upon whoſe bleſſed protection, I ſafely rely for the eternal preſervation of my ſoul.

My heart, my hand, my tongue, mine actions, ſhall be always ready to relieve the neceſſities, to promote the good of thy children; and as this happy reſolution hath had its beginning from thy grace, ſo ſhall its aim be wholly at thy glory.

Bleſſed Lord,

Such is thy gracious goodneſs unto thine, that thou even preventeſt them with thy bleſſings; while they call upon thee thou art ready to anſwer, and before they ſpeak unto thee thou art willing to hear.

Lord I am thy child, and am therefore bold to crave a bleſſing of thee, and what is now more ſuitable to my neceſſities, than the ſweet inſuſion of thy holy Spirit? for I now find (to my grief of heart) that the forein heart of the pleaſures and profits of this life have extracted from me the inward heat of my deſires and longings for thy bleſſed preſence; the adventitious heat of the love of this world hath quite conſumed in me the natural heat of my zeal to thy kingdom.

Lord

Lord, kindle in me those decaying ſparks of thy grace, that they may now grow up into a bright flame of fervent affections to thy glory, and thy children's good.

Teach me to know that godlineſs is great gain, and that the trueſt treaſures are thoſe which are laid up with thee in thy Kingdom.

Lord, pardon my neglects of holy duties; forgive my deadneſs, and my dulneſs unto works of mercy; repair my ſinful breaches by thy preſent graces: O let the fervour of my future charity become a pleaſing ſacrifice to expiate my former miſery; to reconcile my ſoul (in Chriſt) to endleſs miſery. Amen.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Upon the deceitfulneſs of the heart in the performance of holy duties.

NOthing is more common amongſt Chriſtians than to be deluded by the ſhew of holy actions; the heart of man is deceitful above all things, who can know it? holy performances are uſually accompanied with helliſh temptation; when the ſhips of our ſouls is under ſail, and hath the freſheſt way for heaven, we have then moſt need to look to our ſteerage, to have an eye to the compaſs and land-marks.

Which of our holy duties (which are the ſhips we ſail in to the ports of happineſs) have not their rocks to ſplit upon, or Remoraes to hinder them, or croſs winds to divert them, or leaks to ſink them, or ſeas to overwhelm them; when we arrive at any ſmall meaſure of good-

nesse, we many times rest in it, and grow secure upon it: if grace carry us on farther, we are too apt to believe, that we are far better than our neighbours, that we are highly in God's favour, and cannot but deserve his fatherly protection, his liberal remuneration; and and so by this secret insinuation of pride in our hearts, we have folly in our hands, sin in our minds, and shame in our actions.

That prayer is very rare, that is not sick of some distemper; that charity very pure, that can admit of no mistakes, and that performance very perfect, that is not soyled with some filth of wickednesse: How willing are our thoughts to wander in our prayers? how cold and careless are we in them? and how remiss in the performance of them? where is that constancy, that fervency, that holy importunity of spirit that is required of us in this holy exercise? which of us can truly say, that (throughout the whole course of his whole life hitherto) he ever put up one prayer unto Almighty God, that was not cumbred with distracted thoughts, that needed not a present pardon? I tremble at mine own, and grieve at others failings (O let my severest censures of my brothers sins, be assured sins of my best love) How far are we (even the very best of us) from that purity and perfection of soul which becometh this holy duty; and yet how ready are we, even the very worst of us, to believe our selves sufficiently holy, assuredly happy.

We content our selves usually with the very shels and husks, and outsides of Religion; with shews and shadows of devotion; with customary

shomary, cold prayers; intermitted, undigested readings; careless, inconsiderate meditations; hypocritical, pharisaical fastings; popular almsdeeds, having only the shew of godliness, but denying the power thereof. All these, and whatsoever else are like to these, are odious to God, abominable to good men, and most destructive to their souls that are deluded by them.

When, by the sweet assistance of the heavenly goodness, and gentle breathings of his blessed Spirit, we are drawing nearer to our haven; when the anguish, distempers of the soul are abated, and her native and radical heat is grown strong and vigorous; then the fervency of our zeal is a rich evidence of the liveliness of our faith, of the certainty of our hope, of the perfection of our charity; when our affections are inflamed with God's love, and our actions aim only at his glory; when we are grown up to that happy state of grace, that our consciences are pure, our resolutions godly, our conversations unblamable; although we dare not then propose these base and by-respects, these outward aims, unto our selves, yet how cunningly and closely will corruptions steal in upon us, even in these very blessed acts of grace? This is too truly proved, too sadly experienced, even by the very best of Christians: (Lord, in thy rich mercy) give us eyes to discern it, hearts to avoid it.

How often may we find pride in our humility, lust in our desires of chastity, our own private ends in our proposals of God's public interest? when we bear a part amongst the mourners of *Sion*, when we are cast down for some

some humane frailty, we presently conceive highly of our own holiness, and very meanly of others in their relations unto happiness; while we have sought to become better, by the proposal of some strict rules, to preserve chastity, have we not many times become worse, by poysoning those desires by very unclean thoughts, and unclean actions? How many while they have sincerely aimed at Gods glory, by the holy proposal and happy performance of some real good for the benefit of his children, have been secretly surprized with the by-end of their own deserved praise? Lord, how readily have I now met with mine own sins, to thy great glory, and mine own deserved shame? I willingly confess that I am guilty of all this, and infinitely more than this; even these very lines are witnesses against me, of my secret corruptions; O let this my sorrowful confession purchase for thee my free and full remission, that thou may'st have the glory, I the comfort, of these weak endeavours.

And now Lord, seeing I am thus impure, and sinful in mine own eyes, even in the very best of my performances, how loathsom must I needs appear in thy sight, who art purity it self, and canst not behold iniquity! Blessed Lord, as thou hast given me the light of thy Word to discover me unto my self, so give me also the sword of thy Spirit, to deliver me from my self.

Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man, from mine own secret corruptions, and unknown abominations.

Although I am unto mine own soul both ruine and destruction; yet let my blessed Saviour be unto me safety and salvation.

Search

Search my heart (O Lord) and try my reins; O let no base and by-respects inhabit there, to rob thee of thine honour; no false and vain respects, to cheat me of my present holiness, and future happiness.

Pardon and pass by the secret and unknown errors of my sinful life, suppress the great disturbances of my corrupt affections, although they many times prevail against me, yet let thy saving grace (Lord) be sufficient for me.

Lord, make me purely and entirely holy, let me love holiness, neither for fear of thy punishments, nor for hope of thy rewards, but for thy sake only (O my God) who art holiness it self. Let me never think my self holy enough, but forget all those holy actions which are past, and press hard forward towards the mark, for the rich price of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

Lord, crown my holy desires with happy performances, and blessed perseverance, that at the end of my race I may receive the end of my hopes, the salvation of my precious soul, and that for his sake, and perfect holiness, by whom I trust these weak and sinful endeavours of mine, shall be graciously accepted, and faithfully rewarded. Amen.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Upon the unruliness of the Tongue, with necessary cautions to restrain it.

Lord,

THY servant *David* is said to be a man after thine own heart, and yet I find him setting a watch before his lips, that he might not

offend with his tongue if such a chosen vessel as he had so much need of circumspection, what holy cautions had I need to use, what strict rules to observe, who am so far from *David*'s purity, that I am nothing else but wilful impiety? I am so far (Lord) from being at union with thee, that I am even enmity it self against thee.

In vain had holy *David* set a watch before his lips, unless he had first set a guard upon his heart; where the fountain is impure the streams can never be wholsom; if the heart be full of sinful corruption, the tongue will soon overflow with corrupt and sinful communication.

Lord, I need none other proof of this point than mine own sinful failings; how often have I provoked thee to anger, and displeasure against me, by that usual, but most fearful sin of swearing? of which, with shame and sorrow I confess, my younger years were sadly guilty; since when, time and experience having added more light to my mind, but thou (O Lord) especially more grace to my heart, when I would have left it, to my great grief I could not; and had not that thy saving and preventing grace restrained my depraved nature, this sin had doubtless been a sad memorial to my grave: such is the power of sin once grown habitual, O let my sorowful confession be the readers useful instruction, that thou mayest have the glory, I the shame of my mis-doing.

Lord, I have often sinned against thee, by my wretched violation of the truth, in envious detractions from the good of my neighbour, vainglorious aggravations of mine own abilities, censorious taxations of my brethrens infirmities,

indulgent diminutions of mine own iniquities.

I have often grieved thy good Spirit, by which thou hast sealed me up unto the day of redemption, by my vain and idle communications, by my rash and sinful exprobations, by my weak and froward objurgations, to the great dishonour of thee my God, to the continual grief of thy Saints, to the sad disturbance of my self.

All this (to my heart's grief) have I often done, and by all this I may now plainly see, how much I have hitherto been the servant of Sin and Satan, how great an enemy to thy glory, and to the good of mine own soul: But now, Lord, by thine assistance, my special care shall henceforth be, to allow my self no liberty of speech, but what is aiming at eternity: if my heart be heavenly, my words will be precious, my actions holy, mine end happy; and that all this may be so indeed (by thy grace, Lord) I will observe with carefulness, and constancy, these following cautions.

1. Before I speak, I will consider, that I am in thy blessed presence, that what is once spoken can never be recalled, but is recorded for eternity.

2. That each idle word must be accounted for, and that my whole life hitherto hath been little else but vain and empty discourse, tending much to thy dishonour, the hurt of my neighbour, and (without mercy in Christ) the destruction of my own soul.

3. That there is no truer testimony of a graceless heart, than a licentious tongue; that if I be not holy in my discourse, I can never be happy in mine actions.

4. That

4. That it is impossible for those prayers to be pleasing to God, which are offered up with that sinful member, that is so shamefully defiled with evil and corrupt communications amongst men.

5. That if I make a mock at Christianity, by having only a form of godliness in mine outward actions, but denying the power thereof in my usual conversation, God will one day pay me home, by shewing me the richnes of his sufferings, but denying me the benefits thereof, and the sweet enjoyments thereby.

6. That without holiness no man shall see the Lord; and that such as is my common, and most accustomed discourse in my life, I may well fear will be my last, and most uncomfortable expression at my death.

7. Unto all this I will add the shortness, misery, and uncertainty of a sinful life; the horrour and amazement of a wretched death; the extremity and eternity of torments after death. Lord, when my heart is thus guarded by thy grace, my lips I trust will be ever open to thy praise.

Blessed God,

If thy holy Angel durst not give railing accusations against the Devil; if thy Saints in patience possest their own souls, and their speeches be seasoned with salt, administring grace to the hearers; if thou the blessed Saviour of the world, when thou wast reviled, reviledst not again, but as a lamb before the shearers so openedst thou not thy mouth; with what comfort can I now appear before thee? with what confidence expect a blessing from thee?

With

With grief and sorrow I confesse, that my heart hath ever been full of corruption, and naughtinesse, my mouth full of cursing and bitternesse, my daily discourse full of folly and uncleannesse, the whole discourse of my life full of misery and wickednesse.

O that my head were water, and mine eyes a fountain of teares, that I might weep day and night (that I might mourn continually) for mine own and others sins.

Lord purifie my heart, and rectifie my tongue, that both may be accepted of thee, and now and ever graciously directed by thee.

Lord, I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is ever before me, O let the sorrowful remembrance of my sins invite thee to a sweet remembrance of thy mercies, that thou mayest have the praise, and I the comfort of thy gracious pardon.

Lord, let my heart be inflamed with thy love, and my mouth filled with thy praise, that I may sacrifice my soul unto thee, that I may sanctifie my soul before thee, by devout thoughts, by gracious words, and godly actions, that so I may with joyfulnesse and thankfulnesse appear in thy sight, not only all the day long, but even all my life long, that thou (my God) mayest be glorified, the Saints delighted, and my sinful soul eternally comforted. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Upon holy revenge for sin, with motives and encouragements thereunto.

Lord,

I Have ever been too apt to revenge the smallest injuries offered unto me by others, in relation to my outward condition, and to be remiss in that holy revenge of those great and insufferable wrongs which I daily and hourly obtrude upon mine own soul: this plainly sheweth me to have been too much savouring of flesh and blood, too little mindful of thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof. That soul which is truly sensible of its own injury, will (by thy grace) be daily minding of its own redress; and that sinner which is incapable of slight offences, will in time become insensible of greater.

My greatest enemies are those of mine own household: The world may allure me, the devil perswade me, but it is mine own false heart alone that betrays me, and mine own corrupt nature that enslaves me: my greatest care shall therefore be, to bend my strongest force against mine own corruptions; to labour much to subdue mine affections, and to take an holy revenge upon my sinful actions; not to satisfie thy justice, but to implore thy mercy, that I may thereby truly manifest my perfect hatred against sin, and the sincerity of my soul to thy service.

There need none other motives to invite me to this holy duty, than the woful breaches

sin

sin hath daily made in my soul, such as without mercy) will never be repaired; this is too sadly proved by the sensible decay of goodness and the too powerful growth of ungodliness in my corrupt heart; as it is ease for that Castle to stand a close siege, that is well fortified, mann'd and victualled, so is it possible for that Fort to hold out long which maketh no resistance.

Lord, as mine own spiritual ruins have hitherto been caused by mine own neglects, so (by thy gracious assistance) mine own repairs shall be begun and finished, by my present desires, and future endeavours. That time which I have lost by former carelessness, and coldness in Religion, I will endeavour to redeem by holy vigilance, and Christian fortitude; and that I may sincerely be what I intend, with willingness of heart, I offer up this solemn Vow unto thee: Lord, as this holy motion came from thy heavenly Spirit, so enable me to the performance of it, by thy grace, to thy glory, and my souls eternal comfort.

I vow my self a serious and professed enemy to all ungodliness; no sinful thought shall surprise me without a sorrowful sigh; an ungracious word pass me without a sudden retraction, and devout confession; no wicked action defile me without a sincere and godly humiliation; unto each measure of sin I will allow a due measure of sorrow; those sins that have been reigning over me, shall at set hours be constantly revenged by me; and as my body hath been a deep sharer in my sins, so it shall also be a daily sharer in my sufferings. I will

at set seasons deny my self somewhat of these outward enjoyments (which thou, Lord, in mercy hast allowed me) as a true sign of my true sorrow for that sinful excess which I have too often taken without thy allowance. Those sinful hours which have been vainly lost in idleness, and emptiness, shall be willingly redeemed in a constant observation of religious duties; no day shall pass me without a solemn and devout task of devotion, no hour without some sweet ejaculation: And when at any time the troubles and disturbances of this frail life shall deny me happy opportunities for these heavenly performances, what is wanting in act, shall be made up in desire; which thou, Lord, I trust will graciously accept, and look upon as done, because faithfully intended.

O thou infinitely wise, and for ever blessed being, that art truly and eternally happy, without the sinful service of thy creature; and yet commandest us to serve thee for our own sakes, that we may also be happy in thee; thou that lovest not a false and fickle heart, nay delightest in the sacrifice of fools, give me a wise and understanding heart, that I may seriously consider of this Sacred Vow; give me a constant and religious heart, that I may chearfully perform what I have faithfully promised: give me a broken and contrite heart, that I may bitterly bewail what I have foolishly neglected; that thy great name may be glorified, my sinful life amended, my conscience quieted, my Spirit comforted, thy Saints delighted, thine Angels rejoyced, and my soul and body eternally saved in that great and dreadful day of the Lord Jesus, to whom with thee,

thee, O blessed Father, and thine holy Spirit, be all possible praise, and honour, and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

CHAP. XL.

Upon the blessed condition of God's Saints, with motives and encouragements unto Godliness.

Lord,

TO close up these imperfect lines) as I began with that beauty of holiness, which thou thy self art, and is essentially contained in thee, so my souls desire is to end with that blessedness, which we thy Saints enjoy, even in this vale of misery, and is eternally derived from thee; that so I may begin, and end with thee, who art the beginning and end of thy creature, that I may lead thy Servants from the pure fountain of true holiness, to the sweet streams of inward happiness, wherein we may securely bathe our weary souls in rest and quietness, until thy gracious goodness shall conduct us home, unto the full fruition of those joyful rivers of thine endless pleasure.

I am no sooner entred upon this blessed search, but I find my soul ravished with admiration at the greatness, with apprehension of the goodness, with contemplation of the freeness of thy love and favour towards me. I see the great and glorious God of heaven and earth, from all eternity, out of thine own gracious goodness, without all possibility in me (when I was not) either of desiring, or deserving this inestimable love of thine, electing me in Christ (of whom thou hadst no need, from whom

thou

thou couldst receive no benefit) unto holiness and happiness in this life, and unto blessedness in that to come; and as I find this love of thine to be purely, simply, and admirably and eternally great, so it is also truly, necessarily, sufficiently and permanently good.

If it were not truly good, it could never make me truly happy; if not necessarily good, I might then enjoy happiness without it; if not sufficiently good, my happiness enjoyed by it could not afford me satisfaction in it; if not permanently good, what I enjoy in satisfaction, I may want in perfection, by being suddainly removed from it. But thou, O Lord, hast graciously afforded me all these degrees of happiness, that I might be truly and eternally happy, that I might be happy in thee, because there is no attaining happiness but by thee, that I may be happy in soul, and happy in body, happy in life, and happy in death, happy here, and happy hereafter.

Thou, O my blessed Saviour, art sweeter unto me than all sweetness; thou art that blessed All-sufficiency, by which I am both fully, and for ever satisfied: thou art my safe repose, my inviolable peace, my rich rest, my safety in life, my comfort in death, my glory after death. By thy patient sufferings, I am more than conqueror of sin, of sorrow, of death, of hell; by thy glorious resurrection I have assured hope of immortality; by thy blessed ascension of eternal glory; by the one thou hast powerfully defended me against the rage and malice of devils, by the other thou hast graciously exalted me in thy blessed union with

me

me above the nature of Angels; thy peace thou hast left with me, thy peace thou hast given unto me, even that blessed peace of conscience which the world cannot take from me, and that eternity of peace with thee in thy Kingdom, which thou, Lord, in thy rich mercy hast prepared for me. O that I might now lose my self with contemplation of thine endless love, that I might be ravished into extasie, with apprehension of my present safety of my future glory; that all my faculties of soul might be but one entire and pleasing sacrifice of thankfulness unto thee; that in thou (O my Saviour) and the Father are one, so I may be one with thee, to magnifie thy gracious presence here, and to be for ever where thou art hereafter, to see thy great glory, and enjoy mine own endless felicity.

From this for ever blessed fountain of eternal happiness do plentifully flow those pleasant streams of comfort, to the souls and bodies of the Saints, even in this life, by which they are securely quieted, and joyfully contented, even in the very worst of times, which either mans malice, or the devils cruelty, can study to inflict upon them; if they receive injuries, they return prayers, they entertain them with a *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34. and *Lord lay not this sin to their charge*, Acts 7. 60. And so while they lose outwardly, they gain inwardly (and godliness is great gain) for by patience they possess their own souls.

Their courage is undaunted, for, *The righteous is bold as a Lion*, able to encounter the fiercest affliction,

affliction ready to withstand the strongest temptation; if the World frown upon them, they can chearfully say, and faithfully believe, that *A small thing which the righteous hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly*, Psal. 37. 16. if it smile, that *They can account all things but loss and dung in compare of Christ Jesus*; if outward blessings be present, they are humble under them, and thankful for them; if absent, *They can patiently tarry for the Lord, for they know he is their help*, Psal. 33. 14. and that *No good thing will he withhold from them that love him*, Psal. 34. 1. if sickness seize upon them, *The Lord is about their bed, and about their path, and spieth out all their ways* (their ways of sin, and their ways of sorrow) yea, *He maketh their beds in their sickness*, by ease to their bodies, comfort to their souls; if famine threaten them, they have God's promise to maintain them, *For the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon all those that put their trust in his mercy, to deliver their souls from death, and to feed them in their time of scarcity*, Psal. 33. 17, 18. if sudden danger approach them, they have heavenly succour to defend them, for *The angel of the Lord tarrieth about all them that fear him, to deliver them*; yea even Death it self is an advantage to them, and therefore no ways able to affright them, for *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*, and therefore, *Though the Lord kill them, yet will they trust in him*, Job 13. 15. Lord, if thy mercy be thus great unto me, while I am yet in my sinful flesh, how unspeakable shall I find thy love, when my body is become spiritual, my joy eternal?

From these outward enjoyments, may well be deri-

derived their inward contentments, but by their inward refreshments is enjoyed that incomparable, inconceiveable, unutterable sweetness, that blessed peace of God, and joy in the holy Ghost, which passeth all our understanding, God's holy Spirit witnessing with their Spirits, that they are his Children, and most precious in his sight, and they are now fully perswaded, with his blessed Apostle, that *Neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be ever able to seperate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Rom. 8. 37, 38.

How full of solid comfort is this blessed assurance? how are our souls ravished with apprehension of the sweetness of our present comforts, of the fulness of our future joys? these blessed earnests of that ever blessed Spirit, are the faithful pledges of his future embraces, far above the reach of Malice to disturb, or Devil to destroy: Hence it is that our faith is precious, our hope lively, our joy glorious, our lives safe, our deaths blessed, and from hence arise those many and those rich endowments of the Saints, their zeal burning, their love wonderful, their desires earnest, their longings satiate, their petitions for enjoyings importunate: Lord, what can I desire more of thee, than what I enjoy from thee? I have thy mercy without me, and thy mercy within me, thy mercy in life, and thy mercy in death, thy mercy from the beginning, thy mercy to the end, and thy mercy without end, I am even crowned and encompassed with mercy; O let me now say with holy

David,

David, I will always give thanks unto the Lord, and his praise shall be ever in my mouth, Psal. 34. 1. Let me not only praise thee my self, but (with him also) invite others to praise thee, *O praise the Lord with me* (all ye his Saints) *and let us magnifie his name together,* Psal. 34. 3. *O taste and see how gracious the Lord is, blessed is that man which putteth his trust in him. Be glad O ye righteous, and rejoyce in the Lord, and be joyful all ye that are true of heart,* Psal. 32. 12.

And now, Lord, having had a taste of the sweetness of thy Saints happiness on earth, I willingly forsake all to follow them; I have too long been straying in the strange pastures of impiety, and am now joyfully desirous to be led home to thy fold, that I may feed in the green and fresh pastures of thy sacred precepts, and drink freely of those waters of comfort in thy blessed promises, that I may so drink that I may never thirst, but be fully satisfied with thy grace in this life, with thy glory in that to come; O let this evil world neither allure me to its vanities, nor betray me from thy mercies, but as thou hast overcome the world for me, so (by thy grace assisting) it may be also overcome by me: Thou hast indeed told me, that I shall mourn in it, but my mourning shall be turned into joy, and that my joy shall no man take from me; Lord, I believe, help my unbelief; I embrace thy cross, I despise the shame, for that glory which is set before me, of which I have a safe assurance by the blessed earnest of thy holy Spirit in me: To thee, *O Father, Son, and holy Spirit, one eternal infinite, incomprehensible, and ever blessed Godhead, be all possible praise, honour and glory, now and for ever.* Amen.

O

O thou great God, who hast tender bowels of compassions, and multitudes of mercies for us miserable sinners, who are not easie to be provoked, but ever ready to forgive, who sufferest not thy whole displeasure to arise against us, but even in thy very judgments remembrest mercy, and art then moved with the sight of our misery, have mercy upon me a great and grievous sinner.

Lord, I have sinned, I have transgressed, I have done foolishly, in departing from thy judgements. But righteousness belongeth unto thee, (O Lord) and unto me shame and confusion of face: O let thy bowels of compassions remove out of thy sight my multitudes of transgressions, that I may now appear before thee with a joyful heart, and happy soul.

Let thy words be sweeter to me than the honey and the honeycomb (than the vain pleasures, and false pastes of this life) O let my chiefest joy be in thy service, my greatest delight to walk in thy ways, and all false ways (of pollution and uncleanness) for me utterly abhor.

Give me that inward peace, that quietness of conscience, which the world cannot take from me, that when I am afflicted by it, I may not be condemned with it.

Lord, let me faithfully believe, and graciously improve the constancy of thy love, in the worlds great unconstancy, the richness of thy mercy in this wretched ages misery.

O that my eye might drop out without ceasing, that my heart might break forth into complaints, and my soul be melted into sorrows, for mine own and other sins, that have occasioned these heavy judgments, these sad complainings of thy people.

Lord, as I have been a great and grievous sin-

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ner amongſt them, ſo let me be a conſtant and a true mourner for them, as thou haſt beheld us ſinning, ſo now alſo behold us ſorrowing, that as our ſins have provoked thee to anger, ſo our tears may move thee to compaſſion, that thy mercy may be magnified, our miſeries relieved, our ſorrows comforted. O let not theſe bitter aggravations of thy judgments extort from us the leaſt meaſure of impatience, nor beget in us the leaſt degree of diſtruſt; let us neither complain of thy juſtice, nor deſpair of thy mercy, but quietly and thankfully rely upon thee, and in thy bleſſed hour enjoy a ſweet enlargement by thee.

Lord, pity the ſorlorn condition of thy ſons and daughters in affliction, repair their outward loſſes by thine inward graces, that what is wanting to them of theſe earthly comforts, may be abundantly ſupplied in thy heavenly joys.

Forgive the great diſturbers of the peace of this thy Sion, Lord, open their eyes, that they may ſee how much they have erred from thy ways; Lord, ſanctifie their hearts, that they may ſpeedily return unto thee, and be for ever graciouſly accepted of thee. O that thou wouldſt give us one heart, and one voice, that we might ſerve thee without wrafing, that we may be all truly humbled before thee, and truly joyful in thee.

Reſtore me (for thy rich mercy ſake) unto that bleſſed union of love, which is the hand of peace; that as thou our God art one, ſo thy diſtreſſed Church may be one, thy divided people one, their wiſhes and deſires, their prayers and tears, their actions and endeavours one, for thy glory, the Churches ſafety, and the Nations happineſs, that we may have peace with thee our God, peace

with

with our enemies, peace with our own souls, and everlasting peace with thee in thy Kingdom. Amen.

A Comfortable PRAYER *to be used at the point of Death by the Visitors of the Sick.*

O Eternal, Almighty, most merciful, and for ever blessed Lord God of Heaven and Earth, we thy poor and most unworthy creatures, miserable and distressed sinners, in all humility of heart, and dejectedness of spirit, are here prostrate before thee: Lord, we confess, that we are utterly unworthy to approach thy glorious presence; blessed God, we are confounded and ashamed to lift up our sinful eyes unto thee, whose gracious goodness we have so much neglected, whose patience and long-suffering so long abused, whose anger and indignation so justly provoked, whose wrath and fury so wretchedly deserved.

Lord, we are heavy laden with the burden of our sins, and thou alone art able to relieve us, to thee therefore we address our sinful souls

for mercy and forgiveneſs: O thou that art the bleſſed Shepherd of our erring ſouls, that cameſt into the world to ſeek, and to ſave thoſe that are loſt, have mercy upon us: O thou that haſt eſpouſed us unto thy ſelf, and haſt given us thy love, have mercy upon us; O thou that calleſt us to come unto thee, and embraceſt us when we are come, receive our prayers. Lord, give us prepared hearts to meet thee in this holy duty; quicken our benummed ſouls with holy fervency, that our devotions may aſcend unto thy gracious preſence: Lord, thou haſt promiſed to be near unto all thoſe which call upon thee with ſincerity, and faithfulneſs of heart; for thy bleſſed promiſe ſake, we moſt humbly beſeech thee, let our humiliations be comfortable, our prayers acceptable.

In full aſſurance of the ſweetneſs of thy mercy towards us, we are now bold to become Petitioners unto thee for this thy ſick ſervant, whoſe life is drawing near unto the grave: Bleſſed Lord God, it is thou that killeſt and makeſt alive, that bringeſt down to hell, and raiſeſt up again; we moſt meekly beſeech thee therefore, for thy rich and tender love ſake to thine Eleſt, to mitigate that bitter curſe which thou haſt laid upon us all in *Adam*: Lord, look upon his affliction and his travel, and forgive him all his ſins: give him ſure patience to endure with meekneſs whatſoever thou art pleaſed to inflict upon him; Lord, lay no more upon his body, than thou ſhalt make him able for to bear; impoſe no more upon his wounded ſpirit, than thou in mercy ſhalt ſupport him under; Forſake him not, O Lord our God, be not

thou

thou far from him; let him remember, that this chaſtiſement of thine, is common to thy deareſt children; that thou hideſt thy face from him but for a ſmall moment, but with everlaſting kindneſs thou wilt have mercy on him.

Lord, ſettle and compoſe his thoughts for thy Kingdom; let no diſturbance of this life diſtract thoſe bleſſed meditations, which invite the weary ſoul to reſt and quietneſs; let him now ſee, and joyfully believe, that thou wilt order all theſe outward things to thine own glory, and the good of thoſe that have relation to him; let him freely forgive all injuries on earth, and heartily deſire to meet his greateſt enemies in heaven. O let his ſoul be now tranſported with the ſweetneſs of thy love and favour towards him. Lord, qualifie this bitter portion, which thy holy providence hath allotted to him; let him now remember, that the ſufferings of this preſent life, are not worthy of that glory which ſhall be (ſuddainly) revealed in him; and when the outward man is drawing neareſt to his diſſolution, Lord Jeſus ſtrengthen, and rejoyce the inward man with comfort and aſſured confidence of thy Salvation.

To this end (O Lord) we moſt humbly beſeech thee to illuminate his underſtanding, that he may ſee the ſadneſs of his own condition in himſelf, that he may deny and utterly abhor himſelf, that he may diſclaim all ſinful confidence in his own actions and endeavours, and wholly caſt himſelf upon the righteouſneſs of him, in whom alone thy wrath is fully ſatisfied.

Lord, give him a serious and a true remorse of conscience for his many and his great offences; Lord Jesus grant that they may not now appear unto the terror and amazement of his sinful soul: O let him now remember that it is thy precious blood which purgeth him from all iniquity, that thou (O blessed Saviour) art become unto him righteousness, and holiness, and sanctification, and redemption. Lord comfort and assist him in this last and greatest tryal of his faith: And because the sensible decay of his infirm body, and the violent disturbance of his sickness, will not suffer him to call upon thee with digestedness of mind, and quietness of spirit; we therefore humbly pray thee, to sustain and comfort him, even in his greatest weakness and extremity. Blessed God, let the sorrowful sighing of thy sick prisoner now come before thee: O let thy blessed Spirit, which is in him, put up humble supplications to the Father for him: O satisfie him with thy mercy, and that soon; let those happy sighs and groans, which cannot be expressed, become a pleasing sacrifice of thankfulness to thee, and a sweet savour of eternal rest to his departing soul.

O thou that art God of power, protect him from the fury of that roaring Lion, who is now seeking to devour him: O thou that art the blessed Saviour of the sinful world, compassionate his frailties, commiserate his infirmities, forgive his iniquities: Lord, purge him by thy precious blood, cloath him with thine own righteousness, enrich him with thy blessed merits, and plead them to thy Father for him. O

thou

thou holy and for ever bleſſed Spirit, who art the pure fountain of eternal love, be preſent with him, relieve and comfort him in all theſe bitter pangs of his laſt hour, endue him with a willingneſs and cheerfulneſs to leave this tranſitory life, and crown him with eternity of joys in that to come.

And now, O Lord, we come unto thee for our ſelves, who are here at this time upon our ſinful knees before thee, Lord, open our eyes, that we may ſeriouſly conſider of that laſt and ſolemn hour of our departure: Lord, ſanctifie our hearts, that while we are encompaſſed with ſinful fleſh, we may lament our often failings, and infirmities, and every day be more and more deſirous to go home to thee, who art the God of Spirits. Lord, give us grace, that we may walk ſoberly, and righteouſly, and holily, as becometh thy children; that at the reſurrection of the juſt, our ſouls and bodies may enjoy the bleſſed conſummation of their endleſs happineſs. Lord, hear our prayers, and let our crys come unto thee, for thy Name's ſake, for thy Promiſe ſake, for thy bleſſed Son's ſake. *Amen.*

The Conclusion.

BLesſed Lord God, by whoſe only mercy I have finiſhed this imperfect Work, as I began it by thy goodneſs, ſo I deſire to end it with thy praiſe; Lord, accept of it, and graciouſly afford thy bleſſing to it: Let not the weakneſs and the ſinfulneſs of me the Inſtrument, be the Readers diſcouragement, but give glory and honour to thee the Agent; for of thee, and through thee, and to thee are all things, to thee be praiſe for ever. Amen.

SOLI DEO GLORIA.

For

For the comfort and assistance of those that are ready to depart this life, I have hereunto added the Dying Confession of Mr. *Anthony Sadler*, Minister of God's Word, at *West-Thorock* in *Essex*, of which I was an Ear-witness.

Obiit vicesimo die Maii, Anno 1643.

THE Lord hath laid a gracious and a gentle Visitation on me; I do acknowledge (with a thankful heart) these this weakness of body, this languishing of nature, these painful days and nights are from him: For misery cometh not out of the dust, neither doth affliction spring out of the earth, *Job* 5. 6. Ah (my friends) little do men think how much the great disturbances of sickness, how much the pains and infirmities of a decaying body, distract these blessed thoughts, those sweet and happy meditations, which the troubled soul desires; The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak; Lord Jesus strengthen the inward man, and lay no more upon this sinful body, than thou (in mercy) shalt enable it to bear.

I am now verily perswaded, that God hath purposed to determine my days, his blessed will be done, even so Lord Jesus come quickly.

He that looketh into his life past, that ransacketh his soul, and calleth to mind the sinful shiftings

of his youth, will find it very hard and difficult to make his calling and election sure: I have earnestly desired to leave no corner of my soul unsearcht, and I find my self to be a very great and wretched sinner, I have committed grievous sins, very grievous sins, such sins as are not fit to be named before God's Saints; I have examined my soul by each particular Commandment, and I find my self guilty of the breach of all, and that in an high manner, especially considering that weighty Function God's providence hath called me unto: I have not only sinned against mine own soul, but against the souls of others too, when I have corrupted by my ill example, and that very often. And now, when I look upon the glass of the law, and there see mine own vileness, I find God's justice, and mine own deserts, even ready to surprize and cast me down into the nethermost Hell, and that most righteously.

But O see the goodness of a gracious God! I now come to lay hold upon the promises, but how? not without repentance, not presumingly; I apply them not in a general, but particular way; I do not only believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, but I believe also that he died for my sins, and rose again for my justification.——— God hath promised (and all his promises are Yea and Amen) that he will not forsake those which trust in him, nay it hath bound himself unto it by an oath, by two immutable things which cannot fail, his Truth, and his Holiness, Heb. 6. 18. *and God hath said, that he which confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall find mercy,* 1 Joh. 1. 9. *I acknowledge them——— I confess them——— I am grieved for them——— I forsake them———*

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I abhor them—— what should I do more——— God requireth not more of me, and yet for all this I cannot find my self assured of his favour; methinks this sorrow is not so hearty as it ought to be, and yet I know, and stedfastly believe, that if God did not work with me, this sorrow could not be, and where he worketh, there can be nothing wanting; I know that the most righteous man alive cannot perform this work so perfectly as he ought, and therefore I believe, that he which is ascended up on high, hath done it for me in that full and ample manner, which is able to appease his Father's wrath; and I now trust, that by his perfect obedience, this imperfect work of mine shall find a gracious acceptation. This is my hope, and this my belief.

These pauses were supplied with Tears.

May, I can go yet a little further, to strengthen my assurance, that my peace is made with God; I every day, and every hour, do pray unto my Saviour to intercede his Father for me; and if I implore him, he will intercede his Father; and if he intercede his Father, he cannot be denied.

O my God, impute my sins to him, transfer his righteousness to me, and then I know I shall appear a glorious soul before thee. Amen.

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